



Aquatic Nuisance Species Program Update



USCG Addresses Ballast Water Discharges by Vessels that Enter as No Ballast Onboard (NOBOB) Vessels

On May 9, 2005, the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) hosted a public meeting to address ballast water discharges by vessels that enter the Great Lakes as No Ballast Onboard (NOBOB) in Cleveland, OH. The interest in NOBOB vessels is due to the fact they carry residual ballast water and/or sediments that may contain aquatic nuisance species (ANS). Once NOBOB vessels enter the Great Lakes and take up ballast water, this water mixes with the residual water and sediments, and if discharged, may provide a mechanism for an invasion to occur in the Great Lakes. The purpose of the meeting was to seek public comments to provide assistance to the Coast Guard in identifying ballast water management strategies for NOBOB vessels calling on the Great Lakes. Morning and evening sessions were held to allow increased attendance.

There were 35 attendees (not including USCG personnel) at the public meeting representing Congress, Federal agencies, State agencies, International agencies, the shipping industry, maritime equipment manufacturers, non-governmental organizations, and concerned citizens.

To begin the public meeting, Admiral Robert J. Papp Jr., Commander of the Ninth Coast Guard District, welcomed the participants to the meeting. Admiral Papp stressed that preventing the introduction of aquatic nuisance species (ANS) via NOBOBs is a complex and difficult challenge, and he looks forward to working with the public to solve this problem.

USCG representatives provided information on the existing legislative mandates: the Non-indigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990 (NANPCA), and the National Invasive Species Act of 1996 (NISA). NANPCA required the USCG to develop the Great Lakes Mandatory Ballast Water Management Program, which remains the strictest program in the world. The National Ballast Water Management Program is authorized by NISA. Since approximately 60% of vessels calling on U.S. ports are unable to conduct ballast water exchange due to voyage constraints and because there is high variability in ballast water exchange efficacy, the major focus of the USCG is on developing a ballast water discharge standard.

USCG representatives also discussed the process for ballast water examinations, including those vessels that declare NOBOB. USCG verifies that the information reported is accurate, and sampling is carried out to determine compliance. If vessels are not in compliance with the ballast water exchange requirements, vessels are required to retain their ballast onboard for their entire voyage in the Great Lakes or they must go back out 200 nautical miles and 2000 meters to conduct mid-ocean exchange.

There is also significant research being conducted regarding NOBOB vessels. The Director of NOAA's National Center for Research on Aquatic Invasive Species stated that the objectives of their program were to research the type of organisms found in NOBOBs, study resting stages of eggs, cysts, and spores found in NOBOB tanks, and to examine foreign vessel traffic movement in the Great Lakes. Based on their current research, they noted that vessels carrying residual fresh/brackish water pose the greatest risk in introducing ANS to the Great Lakes due to similarity in water characteristics.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

The NOBOB research also demonstrated that of three categories of organisms found in NOBOB tanks,—active organisms in residual water, active organisms in sediments, and inactive organisms in sediments—only the active organisms in the residual water were likely to find their way into the Great Lakes. Many of

these organisms are low in abundance and are already present in the Great Lakes.

In addition, there are new ballast water treatment technologies being addressed, but all must be in compliance with existing federal regulations. USCG representatives asked attendees to keep in mind that treatment options may also be regulated under the

Clean Water Act (CWA) and the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). Due to the fact the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has relegated CWA authority to States, each individual State may have discharge concentration limits applicable to ballast water treatment chemicals.

Ballast Water Management Progress at MEPC 53

The 53rd Session of the Marine Environmental Protection Committee (MEPC) was held at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) headquarters in London, from July 18-22, 2005, where they discussed the development of guidelines for the Ballast Water Management Convention. The main agenda item was ANS in ballast water.

MEPC 52 agreed to an intercessional meeting of the Ballast Water Working Group in the week prior to MEPC 53 to continue the development and review of several guidelines including those for approving Ballast Water Management Systems. Their review was forwarded to MEPC 53 for adoption by an MEPC resolution.

At MEPC 53, guidelines were adopted for ballast water management, ballast water management plans, ballast water management equivalent compliance, and the approval of ballast water management systems. In addition, the Committee adopted

procedures for approving systems that utilize active substances for ballast water management.

The Ballast Water Review Group met to discuss the current state of ballast water treatment technologies and their avail-

rent development and potential capabilities of these technologies. The Review Group concluded that there is no need to amend the implementation dates and standards in the Convention (Regulation B-3). An additional review will be held at MEPC 55 to re-examine the availability of technologies.

Additional guidelines were also developed at MEPC 53. Guidelines for ballast water exchange design and construction were finalized and forwarded to Bulk Liquids Gases, 10th Session (BLG 10). The guidelines for the approval of prototype ballast water treatment technologies were also discussed and approved by the Working Group. Both sets of guidelines will be forwarded to MEPC 54 for adoption.

The Delegation Reports for MEPC 49-52 are currently available online at: <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/mso/IMOMEPC.htm>.



ability in accordance with Regulation D-5 of the Convention. No technologies have been approved under the current guidelines as of yet, but the U.S. and a number of other delegations believe that the focus should also be on the cur-

Ballast Water Management Act of 2005

On July 21, 2005 the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation voted and approved the Ballast Water Management Act of 2005. Once enacted into law, this Act would amend the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990 (NANPCA). This bill includes several provisions, including the requirement to complete a ballast water exchange with ocean waters to re-

duce the chance for introducing invasive species, and the provision that Federal laws would preempt state and local laws.

The Ballast Water Management Act also includes provisions for ballast water treatment and technology. The Act would require ballast water treatment standards to be phased in over time for all vessels that take on ballast water. The U.S. Coast Guard would be given the author-

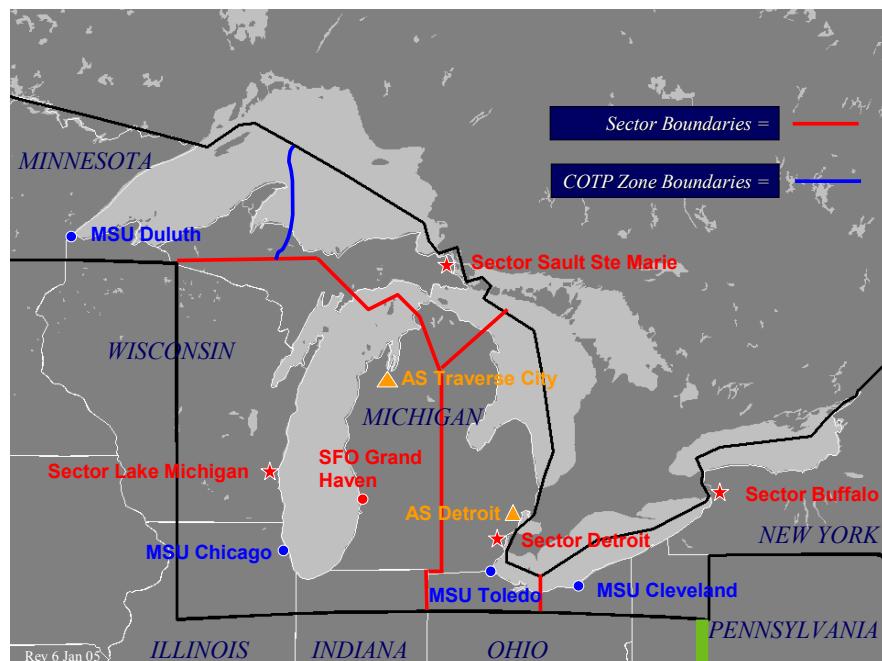
ity to determine the feasibility of the timeline to meet the standards, a well as appoint a higher standard if a technology exists that exceeds the original ballast water standard. Lastly, the Act would allow ship-board testing of new approved technologies likely to meet or exceed the ballast water standards. If approved, the technology may be used for 10 years.

COTP Boundary Changes in New Sector Realignment

Current ballast water management reporting regulations require vessels to report their route of travel, how much ballast they will retain on board and their plans to deballast. These Ballast Water Management (BWM) Reports must be submitted for all voyages in which a vessel enters a Captain of the Port (COTP) zone to anchor or moor, when transiting from another COTP zone or from outside the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). BWM reports are not required for voyages to ports or places solely within a single COTP zone. As a result of the Coast Guard's new Sector realignment, COTP boundaries have changed or been eliminated in certain areas.

The Ninth Coast Guard District

As indicated in the *Notice of Organizational Change* in the July 19, 2005 Federal Register



(Volume 70, Number 137, Page 41413-41415), the Ninth Coast Guard District now has five COTP Zones.

In Lake Michigan, the ports of Chicago, Indiana Harbor,

Burns Harbor, Escanaba, and Traverse City are all now within the Lake Michigan COTP zone (Sector Lake Michigan). Also, the area from just north of Alpena,

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

MI. (south of Stoneport) on Lake Huron, to just west of Vermilion, OH on Lake Erie is now within the Detroit COTP zone (Sector Detroit). Therefore, any voyage to ports within either one of these Sectors will not require a BWM Report to be submitted. However, in Lake Superior, a vessel transiting from Duluth/Superior to Marquette will be crossing through two COTP zones and will be required to submit a BWM Report.

To verify the actual boundaries for when a BWM report must be submitted in the Ninth District, visit <http://www.uscg.mil/d9/>

[WaterwaysMgmtForum.ppt](#) and consult the July 19th Federal Register listed above.

The Seventh Coast Guard District

Under the Sector implementation in the Seventh Coast Guard District, the former Miami COTP zone has been divided into the Miami COTP zone (Sector Miami) and the Key West COTP zone (Sector Key West). Therefore, a vessel transiting between Miami and Key West, Florida must submit a BWM Report to the National Ballast Information Clearinghouse (NBIC) for their voyage. To see the actual delineation between

these zones, consult the two *Notices of Organizational Change* in the August 4, 2004 Federal Register (Volume 69, Number 149, Page 47166-47168 and 47168-47170).

Calendar of Events

- ↳ **August 23-26, 2005**
Marine Bioinvasions Conference
Victoria University
Wellington, New Zealand
- ↳ **March 20-24, 2006**
MEPC 54
IMO Headquarters
4 Albert Embankment
London SE1 7SR UK

