



EXEMPTION OF UNMANNED NON-SELF-PROPELLED (UNSP) BARGES FROM SURVEY AND CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Technical Notice MARPOL.15

*Notice to Ship-owners, Ship Operators, Managers, Masters,
Owners' Representatives and Recognized Organizations*

The Directorate draws the attention of all concerned to the following amendments to Annexes I, IV and VI of the MARPOL Convention – [MEPC.328\(76\)](#), [MEPC.330\(76\)](#) and [MEPC.1/Circ.892 – Exemption of Unmanned Non-Self-Propelled \(UNSP\) Barges from Survey and Certification Requirements](#).

With the aim to reduce the administrative burden of flag States, port States and relevant parties, an exemption of a UNSP barge from certain survey and certification requirements under MARPOL Annexes I, IV and VI may be granted.

These amendments that came into force on 01 November 2022, include individual definitions of a UNSP barge under each Annex together with the exemption certificate templates. It specifies that the Administration may exempt a UNSP barge from the annual survey and certification requirements, for a period not exceeding 5 years provided that the UNSP barge has undergone a survey to confirm that certain conditions are met.

Based on the above UNSP barge is defined as a barge that meets the following:

- not propelled by mechanical means; and
- has neither persons nor living animals on board during navigation; and
- carries no oil; has no fuel oil tank, lubricating oil and bilge oil residues tank and has no machinery fitted that may use oil or generate oil residues (Annex I); and/or
- not used for holding sewage during transport or have any arrangements that could produce sewage (Annex IV); and/or
- has no system, equipment and/or machinery fitted that may generate emissions (Annex VI).

Any such exemption certificate issued will cease to be valid whenever the UNSP barge fails to meet any of the above regardless of whether the owner or operator informs the Administration and/or the port State.

The shipowner/managers should apply to the Recognized Organization (RO) acting on behalf of the Administration, for such an exemption providing the relevant information on the exemption conditions, along with the relevant drawings (General Arrangement Plan, Capacity Plan and any other plans or documents, as necessary). Upon satisfactory review of the submitted plans and information, a survey of the UNSP barge should be carried out to ascertain whether the actual arrangements on board comply with the above listed conditions.

Based on satisfactory results of such a survey, an exemption certificate from the survey and certification requirements under MARPOL Annexes I, IV and/or VI, should be issued with a copy of such certificate forwarded to this Administration on: tech.tm@transport.gov.mt.

Merchant Shipping Directorate

11 June 2024