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Ref. T5/1.03

MEPC.1/Circ.509  
9 May 2006

**NOTIFICATION TO THE ORGANIZATION ON PORTS OR TERMINALS  
WHERE VOLATILE ORGANIC COMPOUNDS (VOCs) EMISSIONS  
ARE TO BE REGULATED**

1 The Marine Environment Protection Committee at its fifty-fourth session held from 20 to 24 March 2006, considered the provisions of regulation 15 of MARPOL Annex VI on Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). Recognizing that MARPOL Annex VI entered into force on 19 May 2005 and that only one Member Government has so far notified the Organization with the information that none of its ports and terminals had such regulations in place.

2 The Government of each Party to the 1997 Protocol which designates ports or terminals at which VOCs emissions are to be regulated shall ensure that shore-based vapour emission control systems, approved by that Government taking into account Standards for Vapour Emission Control systems (issued as MSC/Circ.585), are operated safely and in a manner so as to avoid undue delay to ships.

3 The Committee noted that regulation 15 of MARPOL Annex VI requires Parties to the 1997 Protocol to inform the Organization of their intention to introduce requirements for the use of vapour emission control systems and to notify the Organization of ports and terminals under their jurisdiction where such requirements are already in force. This notification shall include information on the size of tankers to be controlled, on cargoes requiring vapour emission control systems, and the effective date of such control. The notification shall be submitted to the Organization, at least six months before the effective date.

4 The Committee further noted that many terminals are implementing or operating such practices; however the Parties to the 1997 Protocol have not fulfilled their obligation to notify the Organization. The Committee shared the concern that, since there is no circulation of such information, it is difficult for owners and operators to prepare for these changes at ports and terminals.

5 Parties to the 1997 Protocol are required to notify the Organization without delay with information on ports and terminals under its jurisdiction at which VOCs emissions are or will be regulated, and requirements imposed on ships calling at these ports and terminals.

6 With the aim of promoting full utilization of vapour emission control systems in ports and terminals, any information received by the Organization on the availability of vapour emission control systems will be circulated through MEPC circulars so that owners and operators will have up-to-date information on current and future requirements for the utilization of vapour emission control systems.