

## **ROPME SEA AREA BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT REGULATION**

**To: all ship companies, ship's masters:**

The purpose of this Notice is to inform all ship companies and masters that with effect from 1 November 2009, all ships regardless of flags, are required to exchange and/or treat all ballast water taken up outside the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) Sea Area. For details please refer to attached two self explanatory documents, MEPC 59/INF.3 submitted by ROPME/MEMAC, and Marine Safety Advisory No. 49-09 issued by the Marine Administration of Marshall Islands.

All ship companies and masters are hereby advised to pay due attention to the subject requirement and take appropriate actions.

**Classed-Ship-In-Service Department  
China Classification Society**

*Attachments:*

1. MEPC 59/INF.3
2. Marshall Island MSA No.49-09



IMO

*E*

MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION  
COMMITTEE  
59th session  
Agenda item 2

MEPC 59/INF.3  
2 February 2009  
ENGLISH ONLY

## HARMFUL AQUATIC ORGANISMS IN BALLAST WATER

### Second Regional Steering Committee Meeting on Ballast Water Management – Identification of ballast water exchange area outside the ROPME Sea Area

Submitted by ROPME/MEMAC

#### SUMMARY

**Executive summary:** This document provides information on the Second ROPME Sea Area Regional Steering Committee Meeting on Ballast Water Management held in the Kingdom of Bahrain on 4 and 5 November 2008, in which the requirements of mandatory ballast water exchange outside the ROPME Sea Area was discussed

**Strategic direction:** 3.1

**High-level action:** 3.1.1

**Planned output:** 3.1.1.1

**Action to be taken:** Paragraph 10

**Related document:** MEPC 58/INF.4

#### Background

1 In continuation of the efforts for responding to the need for a regional approach to ballast water issue in the ROPME Sea Area (RSA), the Second Regional Steering Committee Meeting was convened in the Kingdom of Bahrain on 4 and 5 November 2008. This regional meeting discussed several aspects related to ballast water management in the ROPME Sea Area. Considering the semi-enclosed nature of the Persian Gulf, the sensitivity of the ecosystem to marine bio-invasions and the very large volume of ballast water being discharged into the sea, in April 2008, the ROPME Council decided to identify ballast water exchange area(s) outside the ROPME Sea Area as a matter of priority, to efficiently address the issue of harmful aquatic organisms in ships' ballast water and sediments. In light of the Ballast Water Management Convention and in accordance with the requirements of regulation B-4 of the this Convention, the Regional Steering Committee Meeting discussed this issue extensively and identified the need for ballast exchange outside the ROPME Sea Area and recommended that ballast water exchange, if any, should be conducted outside the ROPME Sea Area.

## **Introduction**

2 In light of the Ballast Water Management Convention that replaced the voluntary guidelines and considering the specific provisions of the Convention, it is desired to take the necessary steps to mitigate the risk of introduction of unwanted species and also to harmonize National and Regional policies to address the issue of ballast water in the RSA. The ROPME Sea Area is the largest recipient of ships' ballast water. Annually, more than 45,000 vessels visit this area and discharge a large amount of ballast water. The RSA is a semi-enclosed water body with intensely hot summers and short cool winters, extensive air and water temperature fluctuation and relatively high salinity. It is also characterized by high turbidity and low exchange of water with open sea. Taking into account the environmental sensitivity of the RSA, the IMO resolution MEPC.168(56) recognized and designated the RSA as a "Special Area" as of 1 August 2008 for the purpose of Annexes I and V of MARPOL 73/78 Convention. Therefore, there is a need also to manage and control the spread of the harmful aquatic species in ships' ballast water by implementing a set of measures such as ballast water exchange outside the ROPME Sea Area.

## **Environmental conditions in the ROPME Sea Area (RSA)**

3 The RSA is one of the major oil and gas producing areas in the world, with more than 20,000 oil tankers visiting the region every year and steadily growing dry cargo transportation. A very significant amount of oil is spilled into the sea every year as a result of discharges from ships and the region's many offshore oil and gas platforms. Tanker and cargo vessel traffic generates a substantial amount of ballast water discharged in the RSA.

4 With a certain approximation, the RSA can be divided into three parts.

### ***The Inner RSA***

5 This is the area from the Strait of Hormuz to the northern coast with a length of about 550 nautical miles and surrounded by high mountains on the Iranian side and low-lying land on the Arabian side. It is a shallow embayment having a mean depth of about 35 metres with a maximum depth of an average of 70 metres connecting to the Gulf of Oman and the Indian Ocean. The Strait of Hormuz is only 30 nautical miles wide at its narrowest point. The maximum width of the inner part of the region is about 150 nautical miles. It takes about three to five years to exchange the water in the inner RSA.

### ***The Middle RSA***

6 This area comprises of the Gulf of Oman and the east coast of the United Arab Emirates, which is a deep basin with depths exceeding 2,500 metres. It has free access to the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean.

### ***The Outer RSA***

7 This is the area extending from Ras Al-Hadd to the southwestern border of Oman. The area features well developed sandy shores with a large continental shelf to rocky highlands with a narrow continental shelf.

### **Outcome of the meeting**

8 As a conclusion of two days of extensive discussions, the Steering Committee Meeting recognized the need for the establishment of the mandatory ballast water management requirements to address the issue of harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens in ships' ballast water and sediments in line with the ROPME Council decisions in identifying ballast water management as the most appropriate way to improve the regional marine environment.

9 Taking into consideration the provisions of the regulation B-4 of the Ballast Water Management Convention, the Steering Committee decided as follows:

- .1 Vessels arriving from outside the ROPME Sea Area should undertake ballast water exchange en route in water over 200 nautical miles from the nearest land and in water at least 200 metres depth.
- .2 If this is not possible for safety reasons, then vessels should be expected to make minor deviations to areas within the 200 nautical miles limit that can be identified as discharge area, so long as such areas are more than 50 nautical miles from the nearest land in waters at least 200 metres depth.
- .3 If this is not achievable, then the ship shall provide the respective authority with the reason why she has not done so, and further ballast water management measures may be required, consistent with the Ballast Water Management Convention and other international laws.
- .4 These requirements shall take effect from 1 November 2009.

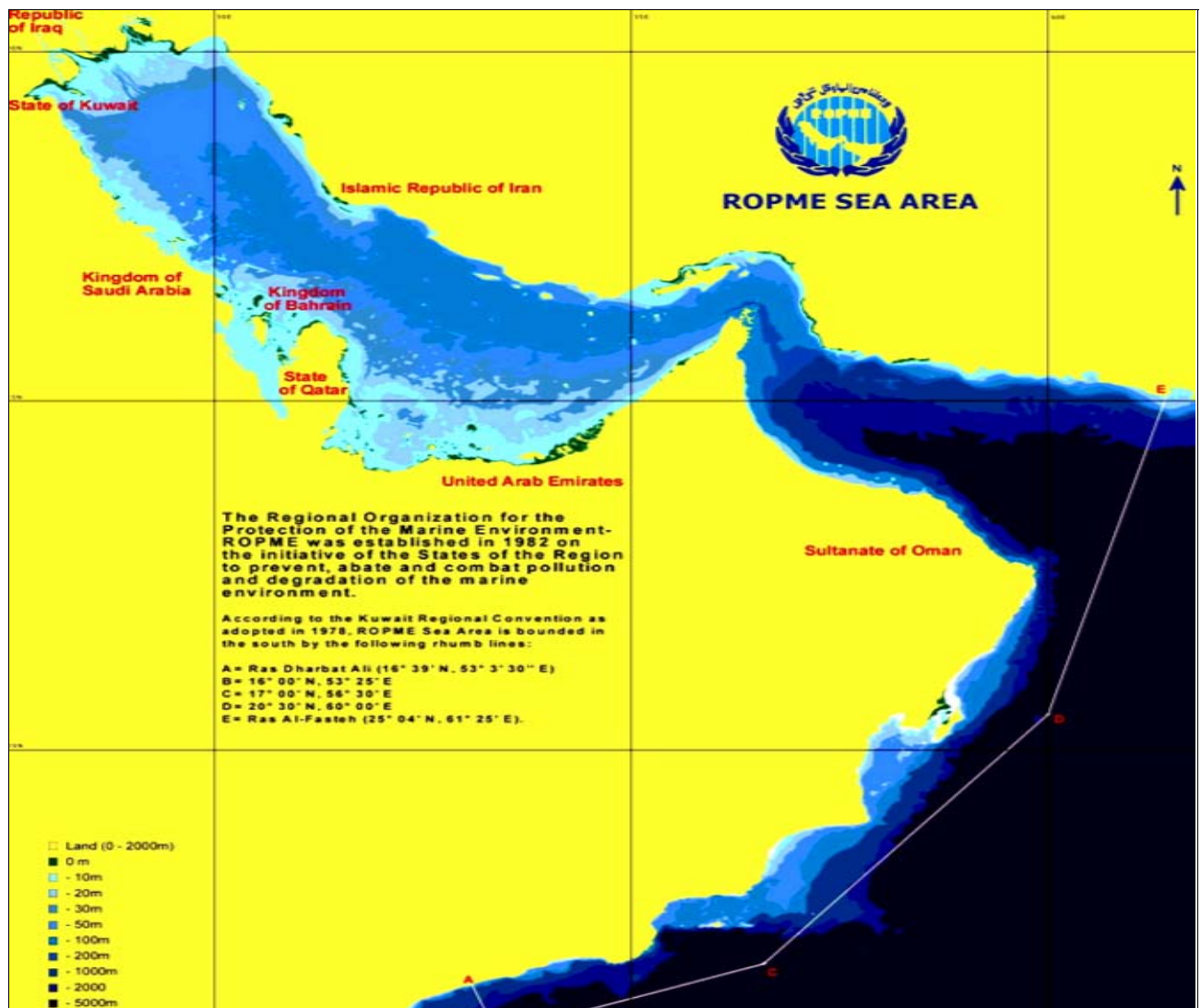
### **Action requested of the Committee**

10 The Committee is invited to note the information contained in this document.

\*\*\*

## ANNEX

## ROPME SEA AREA



# **Republic of the Marshall Islands**

## **Office of the**

### **MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR**

11495 COMMERCE PARK DRIVE, RESTON, VIRGINIA 20191-1507  
TELEPHONE: (703) 620-4880 FAX: (703) 476-8522  
EMAIL: maritime@register-iri.com WEBSITE: www.register-iri.com

#### **MARINE SAFETY ADVISORY NO. 49-09**

**To: Regional Marine Safety Offices, Nautical Inspectors, Masters, Owners/Agents**

**Subject: ROPME SEA AREA BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT REGULATION**

**Date: 29 October 2009**

**Reference: MEPC 59/INF.3 dated 2 February 2009**

With effect from 1 November 2009, all ships, regardless of flag, will be required to exchange and/or treat all ballast water taken up outside the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) Sea Area.

The ROPME Sea Area (RSA) comprises the Kingdom of Bahrain, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Iraq, State of Kuwait, Sultanate of Oman, State of Qatar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates and is defined as extending between the following geographic latitudes and longitudes, respectively: 16°39'N, 53°3'30"E; 16°00'N, 53°25'E; 17°00'N, 56°30'E; 20°30'N, 60°00'E; 25°04'N, 61°25'E. It is the largest recipient of ships' ballast water. Annually, more than 50,000 vessels visit this area and discharge a large amount of ballast water. The RSA is a semi-enclosed water body with intensely hot summers and short cool winters, extensive air and water temperature fluctuation and relatively high salinity. It is also characterized by high turbidity and low exchange of water with the open sea. Therefore, the ROPME has identified a need to manage and control the spread of harmful aquatic species in ships' ballast water by implementing a set of protective measures such as ballast water exchange outside the RSA.

Taking into consideration the provisions of the regulation B-4 of the Ballast Water Management Convention and the Guidelines for Ballast Water Exchange (G-6), the following points should be reasonably observed:

- 1- Vessels arriving from outside the RSA should undertake ballast water exchange en route in water over 200 nautical miles from the nearest land and in water at least 200 metres in depth. Vessels sailing through the Indian Ocean or Arabian Sea should have no difficulties here.
- 2- If this is not possible for safety reasons, then vessels should be expected to make minor deviations to areas within the 200 nautical miles limit that can be identified as discharge area, so long as such areas are more than 50 nautical miles from the nearest land in waters at least 200 metres in depth.

3- If this is not achievable, then the vessel shall provide the respective authority with the reason why it has not been possible to do so and further ballast water management measures may be required, consistent with the Ballast Water Management Convention as they would exist when the Convention is in force and other international laws.

There are few options for vessels sailing from Mediterranean ports to RSA ports via the Suez Canal, Red Sea and Gulf of Aden where there would appear not to be any identified acceptable areas for exchanging ballast water enroute that would comply with the G-6 Guidelines and RSA requirements. Ships don't usually exchange ballast water in the Mediterranean or Red Sea; however, the IMO Secretariat has advised that it has not received any communication regarding existing limitations related to ballast water exchange in the Mediterranean or Red Sea.

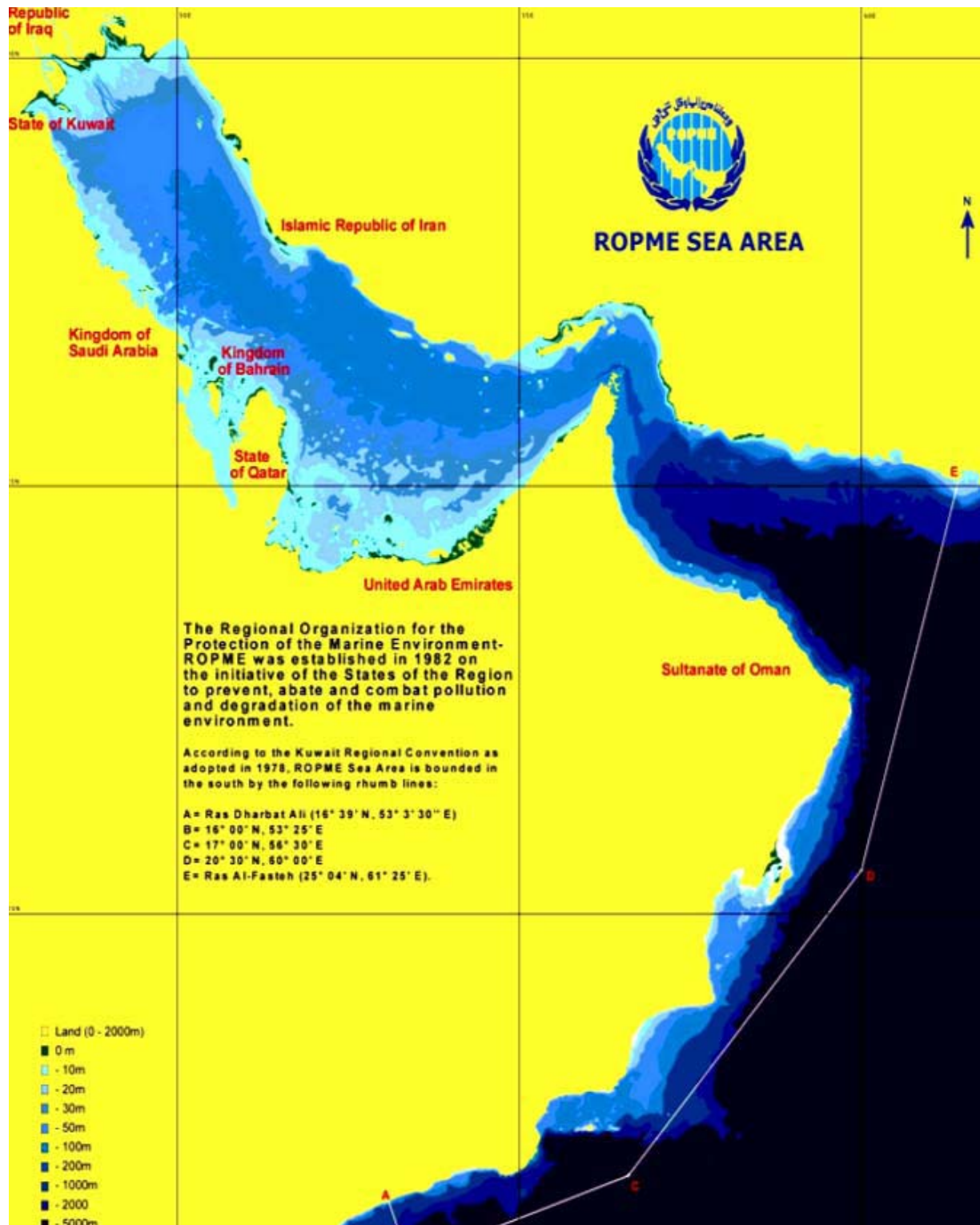
Conducting ballast water exchange operations in the Gulf of Aden (transit through which is very restricted) is not advisable. The only other option would be to divert the vessel 200 NM off the coast after exiting the Gulf of Aden Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC) which is not considered commercially viable, or after considering safety aspects, to go 50NM off the Coast of Oman where there is 200 meters depth. The Administration would agree that the safety and security issues involving piracy in the GOA area are issues to be considered acceptable as examples of 'safety reasons'. This should allow ships which have not yet been able to safely perform the exchange ballast water to do so after exiting the IRTC at a distance of at least 50 NM off the Coast of Oman where there is a water depth of 200 meters.

Ballast water, which has been treated with a ballast water treatment system approved in accordance with IMO Ballast Water Management Guideline G-8 or G-9, does not need to be exchanged.

Ships will be required to have on board an approved Ballast Water Management Plan in accordance with the IMO standards. Ships should also have and maintain a Ballast Water Record Book. Shipowners may refer to Marine Notice 2-014-1 for examples.

From the date specified above, all the ships passing the Strait of Hormoz will be required to complete the Regional Ballast Water Reporting Form (RBWRF) herewith attached. This Reporting Form is virtually identical to the one provided in Marine Notice 2-014-1. Ships will be inspected by the Port State Control Officers to ensure that these Regional requirements are fully implemented.

Should shipowners or operators require further information or assistance, they are advised get in touch with their local Ship's Agent or respective Port Authority, or the Marine Emergency Mutual Aide Centre (MEMAC) as the Regional Centre at [memac@batelco.com.bh](mailto:memac@batelco.com.bh) at the earliest opportunity, and they will be happy to assist.



# ROPME Sea Area Ballast Water Reporting Form

## 1 - BALLAST WATER REPORTING FORM

(To be completed for all vessels arriving in all ROPME Sea Area Ports)

### 1. VESSEL INFORMATION 2. BALLAST WATER

|                        |               |               |                               |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| Vessel Name:           | Type:         | IMO Number:   | Specify Units: m³, MT, LT, ST |
| Owner:                 | GT:           | Call Sign:    | Total Ballast Water on Board: |
| Flag:                  | Arrival Date: | Agent:        |                               |
| Last Port and Country: |               | Arrival Port: | Total Ballast Water Capacity: |
| Next Port and Country: |               |               |                               |

### 3. BALLAST WATER TANKS IS THERE A BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN ON BOARD? YES\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_ HAS THIS BEEN IMPLEMENTED? YES\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_

TOTAL NO. OF TANKS ON BOARD\_\_\_\_ NO. OF TANKS IN BALLAST\_\_\_\_ IF NONE IN BALLAST GO TO NO. 5 YES\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_

NO. OF TANKS EXCHANGED\_\_\_\_ NO. OF TANKS NOT EXCHANGED\_\_\_\_

| 4. BALLAST WATER HISTORY: RECORD ALL TANKS THAT WILL BE DEBALLASTED IN PORT STATE OF ARRIVAL; IF NONE GO TO NO. 5 |                |                      |                   |              |                                                        |                        |                   |         |              |                |                       |                   |                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|---------|--------------|----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Tanks/Holds (list multiple sources/tanks separately)                                                              | BW SOURCE      |                      |                   |              | BW EXCHANGE : circle one: Empty/Refill or Flow Through |                        |                   |         |              | BW DISCHARGE   |                       |                   |                     |
|                                                                                                                   | DATE<br>ddmmyy | PORT or LAT.<br>LONG | VOLUME<br>(units) | TEMP (units) | DATE<br>ddmmyy                                         | ENDPOINT<br>LAT. LONG. | VOLUME<br>(units) | % Exch. | SEA Hgt. (m) | DATE<br>ddmmyy | PORT or LAT.<br>LONG. | VOLUME<br>(units) | SALINITY<br>(units) |
|                                                                                                                   |                |                      |                   |              |                                                        |                        |                   |         |              |                |                       |                   |                     |
|                                                                                                                   |                |                      |                   |              |                                                        |                        |                   |         |              |                |                       |                   |                     |
|                                                                                                                   |                |                      |                   |              |                                                        |                        |                   |         |              |                |                       |                   |                     |
|                                                                                                                   |                |                      |                   |              |                                                        |                        |                   |         |              |                |                       |                   |                     |
|                                                                                                                   |                |                      |                   |              |                                                        |                        |                   |         |              |                |                       |                   |                     |
|                                                                                                                   |                |                      |                   |              |                                                        |                        |                   |         |              |                |                       |                   |                     |
|                                                                                                                   |                |                      |                   |              |                                                        |                        |                   |         |              |                |                       |                   |                     |
| Ballast Water Tank Codes: Forepeak=FP, Aftpeak=AP, Double Bottom=DB, Wing=WT, Topside=TS, Cargo Hold=CH, O=Other  |                |                      |                   |              |                                                        |                        |                   |         |              |                |                       |                   |                     |
|                                                                                                                   |                |                      |                   |              |                                                        |                        |                   |         |              |                |                       |                   |                     |

IF EXCHANGES WERE NOT CONDUCTED, STATE OTHER CONTROL ACTION(S) TAKEN:

IF NONE, STATE REASON WHY NOT:

### 5. IS THERE A BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN? YES\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER'S NAME AND TITLE (PRINTED) AND SIGNATURE: