

# NOTICE TO MARINERS

**No.6 of 2024**

## **Use of Exhaust Gas Open Loop Scrubbers Systems**

Mariners are hereby advised on Belfast Harbour's policy on the discharge of exhaust gas scrubber wash water.

The use of exhaust gas cleaning systems to reduce air pollutants is recognised under MARPOL Annex VI.

As per MSN 1819:

2.1: *Under Regulation 22(4) of the Merchant Shipping (Prevention of Air Pollution from Ships) Regulations 2008 requires that waste streams from the use of exhaust gas cleaning systems equipment are not discharged into any port, harbour or estuary unless it is thoroughly documented that the waste streams will have no adverse impact on the ecosystem of the port, harbour or estuary.*

It is the position of Belfast Harbour that the environmental impacts on wash water have not been thoroughly documented to a sufficient extent. There is concern that wash water discharges from 'Open Loop' type scrubbers may have long term environmental and ecological impacts. Of particular concern are discharge of heavy metals, polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), nitrogen oxides (NOx) and acidification. In addition, there are concerns of the potential for these systems to contaminate seabed sediment which may pose a risk to future dredging campaigns. Under the OSPAR Convention, there are strict restrictions relating to limits for a range of contaminants that are permitted to be in any dredge material that can be disposed in a designated spoil ground.

Please also note that the discharge of pollutants entering the water body could lead to prosecution under The Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999.

Therefore, as a precaution, Belfast Harbour does not permit the use of 'Open-Loop' scrubbers in Belfast Harbour Limits until further notice.



Captain K G Allen  
Harbour Master  
6<sup>th</sup> February 2024