

No. 4714

**BELGIUM, CANADA, DENMARK, FRANCE,
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, etc.**

**International Convention (with annexes) for the Prevention
of Pollution of the Sea by Oil, 1954. Done at London,
on 12 May 1954**

Official texts: English and French.

*Registered by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on
13 March 1959.*

**BELGIQUE, CANADA, DANEMARK, FRANCE,
RÉPUBLIQUE FÉDÉRALE D'ALLEMAGNE, etc.**

**Convention internationale (avec annexes) pour la pré-
vention de la pollution des eaux de la mer par les
hydrocarbures, 1954. Faite à Londres, le 12 mai 1954**

Textes officiels anglais et français.

*Enregistrée par le Royaume-Uni de Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord
le 13 mars 1959.*

No. 4714. INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION¹ FOR THE
PREVENTION OF POLLUTION OF THE SEA BY OIL, 1954.
DONE AT LONDON, ON 12 MAY 1954

The Governments represented at the International Conference on Pollution of the Sea by Oil held in London from 26th April, 1954, to 12th May, 1954,

Desiring to take action by common agreement to prevent pollution of the sea by oil discharged from ships, and considering that this end may best be achieved by the conclusion of a Convention,

Have accordingly appointed the undersigned plenipotentiaries, who, having communicated their full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed as follows :

Article I

(1) For the purposes of the present Convention, the following expressions shall (unless the context otherwise requires) have the meanings hereby respectively assigned to them, that is to say :

“The Bureau” has the meaning assigned to it by Article XXI ;

“Discharge” in relation to oil or to an oily mixture means any discharge or escape howsoever caused ;

“Heavy diesel oil” means marine diesel oil, other than those distillates of which more than 50 per cent, by volume distils at a temperature not exceeding 340°C. when tested by A.S.T.M. Standard Method D.158/53 ;

“Mile” means a nautical mile of 6,080 feet or 1,852 metres ;

“Oil” means crude oil, fuel oil, heavy diesel oil and lubricating oil, and “oily” shall be construed accordingly.

¹ In accordance with the provisions of articles XIV and XV, the Convention came into force on 26 July 1958, twelve months after the date on which ten Governments—including five Governments of countries each with not less than 500,000 gross tons of tanker tonnage—had become parties to the Convention, in respect of the following States which deposited their instruments of acceptance with the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on the dates specified below (asterisk indicates countries having not less than 500,000 gross tons of tanker tonnage) :

* United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . . 6 May	1955	* Denmark	26 November	1956
Mexico	10 May	Canada	19 December	1956
* Sweden	24 May	* Norway	26 January	1957
Federal Republic of Germany (including Land Berlin) . . . 11 June	1956	Ireland	13 February	1957
		Belgium	16 April	1957
		* France	26 July	1957
		Netherlands (including Netherlands New Guinea)	24 July	1958

(2) For the purposes of the present Convention the territories of a Contracting Government mean the territory of the country of which it is the Government and any other territory for the international relations of which the Government is responsible and to which the Convention shall have been extended under Article XVIII.

Article II

The present Convention shall apply to sea-going ships registered in any of the territories of a Contracting Government, except

- (i) ships for the time being used as naval auxiliaries ;
- (ii) ships of under 500 tons gross tonnage ;
- (iii) ships for the time being engaged in the whaling industry ;
- (iv) ships for the time being navigating the Great Lakes of North America and their connecting and tributary waters as far east as the lower exit of the Lachine Canal at Montreal in the Province of Quebec, Canada.

Article III

(1) Subject to the provisions of Articles IV and V, the discharge from any tanker, being a ship to which the Convention applies, within any of the prohibited zones referred to in Annex A¹ to the Convention in relation to tankers of—

- (a) oil ;
- (b) any oily mixture the oil in which fouls the surface of the sea, shall be prohibited.

For the purposes of this paragraph the oil in an oily mixture of less than 100 parts of oil in 1,000,000 parts of the mixture shall not be deemed to foul the surface of the sea.

(2) Subject to the provisions of Articles IV and V, any discharge into the sea from a ship, being a ship to which the Convention applies and not being a tanker, of oily ballast water or tank washings shall be made as far as practicable from land. As from a date three years after the date on which the Convention comes into force, paragraph (1) of this Article shall apply to ships other than tankers as it applies to tankers, except that :

- (a) the prohibited zones in relation to ships other than tankers shall be those referred to as such in Annex A to the Convention ; and

¹ See p. 26 of this volume.

(b) the discharge of oil or of an oily mixture from such a ship shall not be prohibited when the ship is proceeding to a port not provided with such reception facilities as are referred to in Article VIII.

(3) Any contravention of paragraphs (1) and (2) of this Article shall be an offence punishable under the laws of the territory in which the ship is registered.

Article IV

(1) Article III shall not apply to :

- (a) the discharge of oil or of an oily mixture from a ship for the purpose of securing the safety of the ship, preventing damage to the ship or cargo, or saving life at sea ; or
- (b) the escape of oil, or of an oily mixture, resulting from damage to the ship or unavoidable leakage, if all reasonable precautions have been taken after the occurrence of the damage or discovery of the leakage for the purpose of preventing or minimising the escape ;
- (c) the discharge of sediment :—
 - (i) which cannot be pumped from the cargo tanks of tankers by reason of its solidity ; or
 - (ii) which is residue arising from the purification or clarification of oil fuel or lubricating oil,provided that such discharge is made as far from land as is practicable.

(2) In the event of such discharge or escape as is referred to in this Article a statement shall be made in the oil record book required by Article IX of the circumstances of and reason for the discharge.

Article V

Article III shall not apply to the discharge from the bilges of a ship :

- (a) of any oily mixture during the period of twelve months following the date on which the Convention comes into force in respect of the territory in which the ship is registered ;
- (b) after the expiration of such period, of an oily mixture containing no oil other than lubricating oil.

Article VI

The penalties which may be imposed in pursuance of Article III under the law of any of the territories of a Contracting Government in respect of the unlawful discharge from a ship of oil or of an oily mixture into waters outside the territorial

waters of that territory shall not be less than the penalties which may be imposed under the law of that territory in respect of the unlawful discharge of oil or of an oily mixture from a ship into such territorial waters.

Article VII

As from a date twelve months after the present Convention comes into force in respect of any of the territories of a Contracting Government all ships registered in that territory shall be required to be so fitted as to prevent the escape of fuel oil or heavy diesel oil into bilges the contents of which are discharged into the sea without being passed through an oily-water separator.

Article VIII

As from a date three years after the present Convention comes into force in respect of any of the territories of a Contracting Government, that Government shall ensure the provision in each main port in that territory of facilities adequate for the reception, without causing undue delay to ships, of such residues from oily ballast water and tank washings as would remain for disposal by ships, other than tankers, using the port, if the water had been separated by the use of an oily-water separator, a settling tank or otherwise. Each Contracting Government shall from time to time determine which ports are the main ports in its territories for the purposes of this Article, and shall notify the Bureau in writing accordingly indicating whether adequate reception facilities have been installed.

Article IX

(1) There shall be carried in every ship to which the Convention applies an oil record book (whether as part of the ship's official log-book or otherwise) in the form specified in Annex B¹ to the present Convention. The appropriate entries shall be made in that book, and each page of the book, including any statement under paragraph (2) of Article IV, shall be signed by the officer or officers in charge of the operations concerned and by the master of the ship. The written entries in the oil record book shall be in an official language of the territory in which the ship is registered, or in English or French.

(2) The competent authorities of any of the territories of a Contracting Government may inspect on board any such ship while within a port in that territory the oil record book required to be carried in the ship in compliance with the provisions of the Convention, and may make a true copy of any entry in that book and may require the master of the ship to certify that the copy is a true copy of such entry. Any copy so made which purports to have been certified by the master of the ship as a true copy of an entry in the ship's oil record book shall be made admissible in

¹ See p. 30 of this volume.