



**SOUTH AFRICAN MARITIME SAFETY AUTHORITY**  
**MARINE NOTICE NO 4 OF 2021**

[www.samsa.org.za](http://www.samsa.org.za)

146 Lunnon Road, Hillcrest, Pretoria 0083

PO Box 13186  
 Hatfield 0028  
 Tel: +27 12 366 2600  
 Fax: +27 12 366 2601  
 Email:  
[marinenotices@samsa.org.za](mailto:marinenotices@samsa.org.za)

<b>ISSUE DATE</b>	10 March 2021	<b>EXPIRY DATE</b>		<b>REFERENCE</b>	SM6/5/2/1
<b>MATTERS RELATING TO THE IMSBC CODE</b>					

SHIP OWNERS, SHIPPERS, SHIP OPERATORS, MASTERS, SHIP AGENTS, PRINCIPAL OFFICERS, MARINE SURVEYORS AND ALL OTHER PARTIES INVOLVED IN THE TRANSPORTING OF SOLID BULK CARGOES BY SEA.

<u>Affected Marine Notices</u>			
<i>Cancelled or superseded</i>	8 of 2013 5 of 2015	<i>Read in conjunction with:</i>	
<b>SUMMARY</b>			
This Marine Notice draws attention to amendment 05-19 of the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes Code (IMSBC Code) and mandatory implementation of the provisions of the code.			

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The International Maritime Organization Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) at its eighty-fifth session adopted the IMSBC Code by means of Resolution MSC.268(85) which became mandatory under chapter VI and VII of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) 1974, as amended, dealing with the carriage of solid bulk cargo (other than grain).
- 1.2 This Code replaced the Code of Safe Practice for Solid Bulk Cargoes (BC Code).
- 1.3 The IMSBC Code came into force on 01 January 2011 and became mandatory under the provisions of the SOLAS Convention.
- 1.4 Since requirements for cargoes are amended and new cargoes are added, it is known that the Code will need regular updating. Accordingly, the IMO has designed and implemented a system whereby the DSC (Dangerous Goods, Solid cargoes and Containers) Sub-Committee decides and recommends changes on a rolling two-year basis. (i.e. Resolution/Amendments of 2019 resulted in an IMSBC version 2020, which became mandatory on 01 January 2021)
- 1.5 The Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) at its 101st session adopted Amendment 05-19 to IMSBC Code by IMO Resolution MSC.462(101) on 13 June 2019 and enters into force on 1 January 2021. Amendment 05-19 completely revises the IMSBC Code and is a consolidated version of the code.
- 1.6 Amendment 05-19 includes the following:
  - Addition of a Group A cargo schedule for Bauxite Fines and a corresponding test procedure for determining transportable moisture limit (TML) of Bauxite cargoes;
  - New individual cargo schedules and carriage requirements have been added to Appendix 1 of the Code for Group B and C cargoes;
  - The 'Characteristics' table, has been replaced for each individual cargo schedule to clarify the Hazard Classification (subsidiary hazard(s) and MHB);
  - The individual schedule for SEED CAKE (non-hazardous) is deleted;
  - Based on the amendments a new revised Lists of solid bulk cargoes for which a fixed gas fire-extinguishing system may be exempted or for which a fixed gas fire-extinguishing system is ineffective was also adopted by MSC.1/Circ.1395/Rev.4 dated on 13 June 2019, this circular supersedes MSC.1/Circ.1395/Rev.3 dated on June 17, 2017.

**2. Aim of the Code**

The primary aim of the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) Code is to facilitate the safe stowage and shipment of solid bulk cargoes, excluding grain, by providing information on the dangers associated with the shipment of certain types of solid bulk cargoes and instructions on the procedures to be adopted when the shipment of solid bulk cargoes is contemplated. Please note that grain cargoes are covered by the International Grain Code.

### 3. Application

All ships carrying solid bulk cargoes regardless of ship type or date of construction.

### 4. Definitions

**Group A** consists of cargoes which may liquefy if shipped at a moisture content in excess of their transportable moisture limit.

**Group B** consists of cargoes which possess a chemical hazard which could give rise to a dangerous situation on a ship.

**Group C** consists of cargoes which are neither liable to liquefy (group A) nor to possess chemical hazards (group B).

**IMDG Code** means the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code (As Amended).

**Materials hazardous only in bulk (MHB)** means materials which may possess chemical hazards when carried in bulk other than materials classified as dangerous goods in the IMDG Code.

### 5. Shipper, Owners and Masters to note the following:

There have been extensive changes to the IMSBC code from its first adoption. The 2019 Amendment entered into force on 1 January 2021. Shippers and Owners are hereby advised of the following:

#### Cargoes that may liquefy (Group A)

- All Group A cargoes must comply with all the relevant requirements of the IMSBC code and MSC.1/Circ.1454/Rev.1 "Guidelines for developing and approving procedures for sampling, testing and controlling the moisture content for solid bulk cargoes which may liquefy".
- Shippers are to develop procedures for sampling, testing and controlling the moisture content for solid bulk cargoes which may liquefy as detailed in MSC.1/Circ.1454/Rev.1 and submit them for approval.
- The South African Maritime Safety Authority is the Competent Authority of the load port for approving the shippers' procedures for sampling, testing and controlling the moisture content for solid bulk cargoes which may liquefy (commonly referred to as Moisture Management Plan).
- No cargo which may liquefy can be shipped without a letter of approval from SAMSA stating the shippers compliance with MSC.1/Circ.1454/Rev.1 "Guidelines for developing and approving procedures for sampling, testing and controlling the moisture content for solid bulk cargoes which may liquefy". A copy of which must be submitted to the Master prior to loading the cargo.
- SAMSA will not issue any "Authorisation to Load" for cargoes that may liquefy. However, Authorisations to Load on a case by case basis may be considered only in very exceptional circumstances by the Principal Officer of the port.
- Shippers are to ensure full compliance with the above for cargoes which may liquefy, failure to do so may result in the vessel loading to be suspended, detained and/or discharged immediately.

#### Cargoes which possess a chemical hazard which could give rise to a dangerous situation on a ship (Group B)

- Amendment 05-19 replaces the 'Characteristics' table, for each individual cargo schedule to clarify the Hazard Classification (subsidiary hazard(s) and MHB.
- Section 9 of the IMSBC code covers Materials possessing chemical hazards and is to be complied with. The Shipper's Cargo Declaration must be in compliance to the IMSBC Code Section 4, which includes MHB Notational Reference, as applicable.

As per IMSBC Code Section 9.2.3.1.5:

*A notational reference shall be provided in the "MHB" cell of the Characteristics table for each individual schedule for cargoes classified as MHB. When a material possesses one or more of the chemical hazards as defined below, the notational reference for each hazard shall be included in the "MHB" cell. A summary of the notational references is presented in the table below:*

<b>Chemical hazard</b>	<b>Notational reference</b>
Combustible solids	CB
Self-heating solids	SH
Solids that evolve flammable gas when wet	WF
Solids that evolve toxic gas when wet	WT
Toxic solids	TX
Corrosive solids	CR
Other hazards	OH

- Group B cargoes may require additional tests to be conducted as detailed in Section 9 of the IMSBC code.
- Shippers are to ensure full compliance with the above for cargoes which possess a chemical hazard which could give rise to a dangerous situation on a ship, failure to do so may result in the vessel loading to be suspended, detained and/or discharged immediately.
- While clear guidance is pending from IMO on frequency of conducting these tests, tests as required in Section 9 of the code are to be re-done every 5 years or if there is any known or suspected change in the material.

#### **Self-Heating Test for Coal**

- SAMSA is aware of a concern with regard to the Self Heating Test (SH) for Coal and therefore, will accept a coal consignment to be classed as Self Heating (SH), in the absence of the tests as described in the IMSBC Code section 9.2.3.3 being conducted, until 30 June 2021, unless revoked by SAMSA before the aforementioned date.

## **6. General**

Most cargoes have certain specific requirements and thus it is principally a question of checking the latest version of the Code to see which requirements are applicable for that particular cargo. In the limited instances of unusual requirements, the familiarisation needed to comply is minimal.

The IMSBC Code is available from the International Maritime Organization website - [www.imo.org](http://www.imo.org) or from any local distributor, or via the internet.

Shippers/agents may contact their local SAMSA office for further information.

It is the Shippers responsibility to ensure the Master receives all documentation as required in the IMSBC Code.

## **7. Procedures to be followed for Bulk Cargo Shipment not listed in the IMSBC Code.**

**7.1** All parties involved in the shipment of solid bulk cargoes shall ensure that they have available and readily at hand the latest current edition of the IMSBC Code (International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes Code) which is published by IMO. This publication which is updated at regular intervals lays down in great detail information as to the manner in which solid bulk cargoes should be shipped and should always be consulted prior to planning actioning any shipment. The procedures / actions to be complied with for listed cargoes are laid down within the code.

**7.2** It is apparent that a degree of confusion currently exists within the shipping industry as to the statutory procedures which have to be complied with for the shipment of solid bulk cargoes which are not listed in the IMSBC Code. The procedures to be followed for **unlisted** cargoes are dealt herewith. All concerned should

strictly adhere to these procedures which are statutory. Non-compliance and improper planning of shipments will prejudice marine safety and undoubtedly lead to costly delays.

- 7.3** Shipments of unlisted cargoes require SAMSA approval. Provisions of the IMSBC apply to all vessels to which the SOLAS convention as amended applies and are carrying solid bulk cargoes. Application accompanied by the required documentation should be timeously submitted to the Principal Officer SAMSA at the intended port of loading.
- 7.4** The following summarises the procedures for unlisted cargoes. The code should be consulted for detailed advice. (See section 1, item 1.3 through to item 1.3.3 and section 4 of the code)
- When a solid bulk cargo that is not listed in appendix 1 of the code is proposed for carriage in bulk, the shipper shall prior to loading provide SAMSA at the port of loading with the characteristics and properties of the cargo in accordance with Section 4 of the code. Based on the information received, the Authority (SAMSA) will assess the acceptability of the cargo for safe shipment.
  - Section 4 of the code relates to assessment of acceptability of consignments for safe shipment. Section 4 deals with:-
    1. Identification and classification. (4.1)
    2. Provision of information. (4.2)
    3. Form for cargo information. (4.2.3)
    4. Certificates of test. (4.3)
    5. Sampling procedures. (4.4)
    6. Interval between sampling / testing and loading for TML (Transportable Moisture Limit) and moisture content determination. (4.5)
    7. Sampling procedures for concentrate stockpiles. (4.6)
    8. Examples of standardised sampling procedures, for information. (4.7)
    9. Documentation required on board the ship carrying dangerous goods. (4.8)
- 7.5** When it is assessed that the solid bulk cargo proposed for shipment may possess hazards as those defined in Group A or B of the code and as defined in 1.7 (Definitions) advice is to be sought from the competent authorities of the port(s) of unloading and the flag state of the carrier. The three competent authorities will set the preliminary suitable conditions for the carriage of the cargo.
- 7.6** Reference should be made to MSC.1/Circ.1453/Rev.1 of 12 June 2015.
- 7.7** When it is assessed that the solid bulk cargo proposed for carriage presents no specific hazards for transportation, the carriage of the cargo shall be authorised. The competent authority (SAMSA) shall advise the competent authorities of the port(s) of unloading and the flag state of the carrier of such authorisation.
- 7.8** The competent authority at the port of loading (SAMSA) shall provide to the Master of the vessel a certificate stating the characteristics of the cargo and the required conditions for carriage and handling of the shipment. The Competent Authority shall also submit an application to the International Maritime Organisation within one year from the issue of this certificate to incorporate the solid bulk cargo into Appendix 1 of the code.
- 7.9** It is again stressed that all parties concerned with both listed and unlisted solid bulk cargoes should have readily at hand an up to date copy of the IMSBC Code and that all applications and documentation should be submitted in full and timeously.

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