
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1997 No. 2590

MERCHANT SHIPPING

**The Merchant Shipping (Oil
Pollution) (Virgin Islands) Order 1997**

Made - - - - 30th October 1997

Coming into force - - 30th November 1997

At the Court at Buckingham Palace, the 30th day of October 1997

Present,

The Queen's Most Excellent Majesty in Council

Her Majesty, in exercise of the powers conferred on Her by section 315(2) of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995(1) and all other powers enabling Her in that behalf, is pleased, by and with the advice of Her Privy Council, to order, and it is hereby ordered, as follows:—

Citation and Commencement

1. This Order may be cited as the Merchant Shipping (Oil Pollution) (Virgin Islands) Order 1997 and shall come into force on 30th November 1997.

Implementation of the Liability and Fund Conventions

2. Sections 152 to 170(2) and 172 to 181 of, and Schedule 5 to, the Merchant Shipping Act 1995, subject to the exceptions, adaptations and modifications set out in the Schedule to this Order, shall extend to the Virgin Islands, and any instrument made, or to be made, under section 152(2), 157(2), 157(4), 172(2) or 176(5) shall also extend to the Virgin Islands.

Revocations

3. The following Orders are hereby revoked —

- (a) The Merchant Shipping (Oil Pollution) (Virgin Islands) Order 1975(3) ; and
- (b) The Merchant Shipping (Oil Pollution) (British Virgin Islands) Order 1981(4).

(1) 1995 c. 21.

(2) Section 158(2) was amended and section 158(2A) was added, by section 29(1) and Schedule 6 paragraph 4 of the Merchant Shipping and Maritime Security Act 1997 (1997 c. 28).

(3) S.I.1975/2175.

(4) S.I. 1981/216.

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N. H. Nicholls
Clerk of the Privy Council

**SCHEDULE TO
THE ORDER**

Article 2.

THE MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT 1995

**PART VI
PREVENTION OF POLLUTION
CHAPTER III
LIABILITY FOR OIL POLLUTION.**

Preliminary

Meaning of “the Liability Convention” and related expressions.

152.—(1) In this Chapter –

“the Liability Convention” means the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage 1992;

“Liability Convention country” means a country in respect of which the Liability Convention is in force, and includes the United Kingdom and any relevant British possession to which the Liability Convention has been extended; and

“Liability Convention State” means a State which is a party to the Convention.

(2) If Her Majesty by Order in Council made declares that any State specified in the Order is a party to the Liability Convention in respect of any country so specified the Order shall, while in force, be conclusive evidence that that State is a party to the Liability Convention in respect of that country.

Liability

Meaning of “the Liability Convention” and related expressions.

153.—(1) Where, as a result of any occurrence, any oil is discharged or escapes from a ship to which this section applies, then (except as otherwise provided by this Chapter) the owner of the ship shall be liable—

- (a) for any damage caused outside the ship in the territory of the Virgin Islands by contamination resulting from the discharge or escape; and
- (b) for the cost of any measures reasonably taken after the discharge or escape for the purpose of preventing or minimising any damage so caused in the territory of the Virgin Islands by contamination resulting from the discharge or escape; and
- (c) for any damage caused in the territory of the Virgin Islands by any measures so taken.

(2) Where, as a result of any occurrence, there arises a grave and imminent threat of damage being caused outside a ship to which this section applies by the contamination that might result if there were a discharge or escape of oil from the ship, then (except as otherwise provided by this Chapter) the owner of the ship shall be liable –

- (a) for the cost of any measures reasonably taken for the purpose of preventing or minimising any such damage in the territory of the Virgin Islands, and
- (b) for any damage caused outside the ship in the territory of the Virgin Islands by any measures so taken;

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and in this Chapter any such threat is referred to as a relevant threat of contamination.

(3) Subject to subsection (4) below, this section applies to any ship constructed or adapted for carrying oil in bulk as cargo.

(4) Where any ship so constructed or adapted is capable of carrying other cargoes besides oil, this section shall apply to any such ship –

- (a) while it is carrying oil in bulk as cargo; and
- (b) unless it is proved that no residues from the carriage of any such oil remain in the ship, while it is on any voyage following the carriage of any such oil,

but not otherwise.

(5) Where a person incurs a liability under subsection (1) or (2) above he shall also be liable for any damage or cost for which he would be liable under that subsection if the references in it to the territory of the Virgin Islands included the territory of any other Liability Convention country.

(6) Where –

- (a) as a result of any occurrence, a liability is incurred under this section by the owner of each of two or more ships, but
- (b) the damage or cost for which each of the owners would be liable cannot reasonably be separated from that for which the other or others would be liable,

each of the owners shall be liable, jointly with the other or others, for the whole of the damage or cost for which the owners together would be liable under this section.

(7) For the purposes of this Chapter –

- (a) references to a discharge or escape of oil from a ship are references to such a discharge or escape wherever it may occur, and whether it is of oil carried in a cargo tank or of oil carried in a bunker fuel tank;
- (b) where more than one discharge or escape results from the same occurrence or from a series of occurrences having the same origin, they shall be treated as one, but any measures taken after the first of them shall be deemed to have been taken after the discharge or escape; and
- (c) where a relevant threat of contamination results from a series of occurrences having the same origin, they shall be treated as a single occurrence.

(8) If the owner proves that the pollution damage resulted to any extent from an act or omission done with intent to cause damage by the person who suffered the damage or from the negligence of that person, the owner shall be exonerated to that extent from his liability to such person.

154.—(1) Where, as a result of any occurrence, any oil is discharged or escapes from a ship other than a ship to which section 153 applies, then (except as otherwise provided by this Chapter) the owner of the ship shall be liable –

- (a) for any damage caused outside the ship in the territory of the Virgin Islands by contamination resulting from the discharge or escape; and
- (b) for the cost of any measures reasonably taken after the discharge or escape for the purpose of preventing or minimising any damage so caused in the territory of the Virgin Islands by contamination resulting from the discharge or escape; and
- (c) for any damage so caused in the territory of the Virgin Islands by any measures so taken.

(2) Where, as a result of any occurrence, there arises a grave and imminent threat of damage being caused outside a ship other than a ship to which section 153 applies by the contamination which might result if there were a discharge or escape of oil from the ship, then (except as otherwise provided by this Chapter) the owner of the ship shall be liable –

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- (a) for the cost of any measures reasonably taken for the purpose of preventing or minimising any such damage in the territory of the Virgin Islands; and
- (b) for any damage caused outside the ship in the territory of the Virgin Islands by any measures so taken;

and in the subsequent provisions of this Chapter any such threat is referred to as a relevant threat of contamination.

(3) Where –

- (a) as a result of any occurrence, a liability is incurred under this section by the owner of each of two or more ships, but
- (b) the damage or cost for which each of the owners would be liable cannot reasonably be separated from that for which the other or others would be liable,

each of the owners shall be liable, jointly with the other or others, for the whole of the damage or cost for which the owners together would be liable under this section.

(4) If the owner proves that the pollution damage resulted to any extent from an act or omission done with intent to cause damage by the person who suffered the damage or from the negligence of that person, the owner shall be exonerated to that extent from his liability to such person.

(5) In this section “ship” includes a vessel which is not seagoing.

Exceptions from liability under sections 153 and 154.

155. –No liability shall be incurred by the owner of a ship under section 153 or 154 by reason of any discharge or escape of oil from the ship, or by reason of any relevant threat of contamination, if he proves that the discharge or escape, or (as the case may be) the threat of contamination –

- (a) resulted from an act of war, hostilities, civil war, insurrection or an exceptional, inevitable and irresistible natural phenomenon; or
- (b) was due wholly to anything done or omitted to be done by another person, not being a servant or agent of the owner, with intent to do damage; or
- (c) was due wholly to the negligence or wrongful act of a government or other authority in exercising its function of maintaining lights or other navigational aids for the maintenance of which it was responsible.

Restriction of liability for oil pollution.

156.—(1) Where, as a result of any occurrence –

- (a) any oil is discharged or escapes from a ship (whether one to which section 153 or one to which section 154 applies), or
- (b) there arises a relevant threat of contamination,

then, whether or not the owner of the ship in question incurs a liability under section 153 or 154 –

- (i) he shall not be liable otherwise than under that section for any such damage or cost as is mentioned in it, and
- (ii) no person to whom this paragraph applies shall be liable for any such damage or cost unless it resulted from anything done or omitted to be done by him either with intent to cause any such damage or cost or recklessly and in the knowledge that any such damage or cost would probably result.

(2) Subsection (1) (ii) above applies to –

- (a) any servant or agent of the owner of the ship;

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- (b) any person not falling within paragraph (a) above but employed or engaged in any capacity on board the ship or to perform any service for the ship;
 - (c) any charterer of the ship (however described and including a bareboat charterer), and any manager or operator of the ship;
 - (d) any person performing salvage operations with the consent of the owner of the ship or on the instructions of a competent public authority;
 - (e) any person taking any such measures as are mentioned in subsection (1)(b) or (2) (a) of section 153 or 154;
 - (f) any servant or agent of a person falling within paragraph (c),(d) or (e) above.
- (3) The liability of the owner of a ship under section 153 or 154 for any impairment of the environment shall be taken to be a liability only in respect of –
- (a) any resulting loss of profits, and
 - (b) the cost of any reasonable measures of reinstatement actually taken or to be taken.

Limitation of liability

Limitation of liability under section 153.

157.—(1) Where, as a result of any occurrence, the owner of a ship incurs liability under section 153 by reason of a discharge or escape or by reason of any relevant threat of contamination, then (subject to subsection (3) below) –

- (a) he may limit that liability in accordance with the provisions of this Chapter, and
 - (b) if he does so, his liability (being the aggregate of his liabilities under section 153 resulting from the occurrence) shall not exceed the relevant amount.
- (2) In subsection (1) above, “the relevant amount” means –
- (a) in relation to a ship not exceeding 5,000 tons, three million special drawing rights;
 - (b) in relation to a ship exceeding 5,000 tons, three million special drawing rights together with an additional 420 special drawing rights for each ton of its tonnage in excess of 5,000 tons up to a maximum amount of 59.7 million special drawing rights;

but the Secretary of State may by order make such amendments of paragraphs (a) and (b) above as appear to him to be appropriate for the purpose of giving effect to the entry into force of any amendment of the limits of liability laid down in paragraph 1 of Article V of the Liability Convention.

(3) Subsection (1) above shall not apply in a case where it is proved that the discharge or escape, or (as the case may be) the relevant threat of contamination, resulted from anything done or omitted to be done by the owner either with intent to cause any such damage or cost as is mentioned in section 153 or recklessly and in the knowledge that any such damage or cost would probably result.

(4) For the purpose of this section a ship’s tonnage shall be its gross tonnage calculated in such a manner as may be prescribed by an order made by the Secretary of State.

(5) . . .

Limitation actions.

158.—(1) Where the owner of a ship has or is alleged to have incurred a liability under section 153 he may apply to the court for the limitation of that liability to an amount determined in accordance with section 157.

(2) If on such an application the court finds that the applicant has incurred such a liability but has not found that he is entitled to limit it, the court shall, after determining the limit which would

apply to the applicant's liability if he were entitled to limit it and directing payment into court of the amount of that limit –

- (a) determine the amounts that would, apart from the limit, be due in respect of the liability to the several persons making claims in the proceedings; and
- (b) direct the distribution of the amount paid into court (or, as the case may be, so much of it as does not exceed the liability) among those persons in proportion to their claims, subject to the following provisions of this section.

(2A) Where

- (a) a distribution is made under subsection (2) (b) above without the court having found that the applicant is entitled to limit his liability, and
- (b) the court subsequently finds that the applicant is not so entitled,

the making of the distribution is not to be regarded as affecting the applicant's liability in excess of the amount distributed.

(3) A payment into court of the amount of a limit determined in pursuance of this section shall be made in dollars; and

- (a) for the purpose of converting such an amount from special drawing rights into dollars one special drawing right shall be treated as equal to such a sum in dollars as the International Monetary Fund have fixed as being the equivalent of one special drawing right for –
 - (i) the day on which the determination is made; or
 - (ii) if no sum has been so fixed for that day, the last day before that day for which a sum has been so fixed;
- (b) a certificate given by or on behalf of the Ministry of Finance stating –
 - (i) that a particular sum in dollars has been so fixed for the day on which the determination was made, or
 - (ii) that no sum has been so fixed for that day and that a particular sum in dollars has been so Fixed for a day which is the last day for which a sum has been so Fixed before the day on which the determination was made,shall be conclusive evidence of those matters for the purposes of this Chapter;

- (c) a document purporting to be such a certificate shall, in any proceedings, be received in evidence and, unless the contrary is proved, be deemed to be such a certificate.

(4) No claim shall be admitted in proceedings under this section unless it is made within such time as the court may direct or such further time as the court may allow.

(5) Where any sum has been paid in or towards satisfaction of any claim in respect of the damage or cost to which the liability extends –

- (a) by the owner or the persons referred to in section 165 “the insurer” or
- (b) by a person who has or is alleged to have incurred a liability, otherwise than under section 153, for the damage or cost and who is entitled to limit his liability in connection with the ship by virtue of section 17 or 18 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1979 as extended to the Virgin Islands **(5)**

the person who paid the sum shall, to the extent of that sum, be in the same position with respect to any distribution made in proceedings under this section as the person to whom it was paid would have been.

(5) Sections 17 and 18 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1979 were extended to the Virgin Islands by The Merchant Shipping Act 1979 (British Virgin Islands) Order 1980 (S.I. 1980/1511).

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(6) Where the person who incurred the liability has voluntarily made any reasonable sacrifices or taken any other reasonable measures to prevent or reduce damage to which the liability extends or might have extended he shall be in the same position with respect to any distribution made in proceedings under this section as if he had a claim in respect of the liability equal to the cost of the sacrifice or other measures.

(7) The court may, if it thinks fit, postpone the distribution of such part of the amount to be distributed as it deems appropriate having regard to any claims that may later be established before a court of any country outside the Virgin Islands.

(8) No lien or other right in respect of any ship or other property shall affect the proportions in which any amount is distributed in accordance with subsection (2)(b) above.

Restriction on enforcement after establishment of limitation fund.

159.—(1) Where the court has found that a person who has incurred a liability under section 153 is entitled to limit that liability to any amount and he has paid into court a sum not less than that amount –

- (a) the court shall order the release of any ship or other property arrested in connection with a claim in respect of that liability or any security given to prevent or obtain release from such an arrest; and
- (b) no judgment or decree for any such claim shall be enforced, except so far as it is for costs....;

if the sum paid into court, or such part thereof as corresponds to the claim, will be actually available to the claimant or would have been available to him if the proper steps in the proceedings under section 158 had been taken.

Concurrent liabilities of owners and others.

160. Where, as a result of any discharge or escape of oil from a ship or as a result of any relevant threat of contamination, the owner of the ship incurs a liability under section 153 and any other person incurs a liability, otherwise than under that section, for any such damage or cost as is mentioned in subsection (1) or (2) of that section then, if –

- (a) the owner has been found, in proceedings under section 158 to be entitled to limit his liability to any amount and has paid into court a sum not less than the amount; and
- (b) the other person is entitled to limit his liability in connection with the ship by virtue of section 17 or 18 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1979 as extended to the Virgin Islands

no proceedings shall be taken against the other person in respect of his liability, and if any such proceedings were commenced before the owner paid the sum into court, no further steps shall be taken in the proceedings except in relation to costs.

Establishment of limitation fund outside Virgin Islands.

161. Where the events resulting in the liability of any person under section 153 also resulted in a corresponding liability under the law of another Liability Convention country sections 159 and 160 shall apply as if the references to sections 153 and 158 included references to the corresponding provisions of that law and the references to sums paid into court included references to any sums secured under those provisions in respect of the liability.

Extinguishment of claims.

162. No action to enforce a claim in respect of a liability incurred under section 153 or 154 shall be entertained by any court in the Virgin Islands unless the action is commenced not later than three

years after the claim arose nor later than six years after the occurrence or first of the occurrences resulting in the discharge or escape, or (as the case may be) in the relevant threat of contamination, by reason of which the liability was incurred.

Compulsory insurance against liability for pollution.

163.—(1) Subject to the provisions of this Chapter relating to Government ships, subsection (2) below shall apply to any ship carrying in bulk a cargo of more than 2,000 tons of oil of a description specified in regulations made by the Governor.

(2) The ship shall not enter or leave a port in the Virgin Islands or arrive at or leave a terminal in the territorial sea of the Virgin Islands nor, if the ship is registered in the Virgin Islands, a port in any other country or a terminal in the territorial sea of any other country, unless there is in force a certificate complying with the provisions of subsection (3) below and showing that there is in force in respect of the ship a contract of insurance or other security satisfying the requirements of Article VIII of the Liability Convention (cover for owner's liability).

(3) The certificate must be –

- (a) if the ship is registered in the Virgin Islands, a certificate issued by the Governor;
- (b) if the ship is registered in a Liability Convention country other than the Virgin Islands, a certificate issued by or under the authority of the government of the other Liability Convention country; and
- (c) if the ship is registered in a country which is not a Liability Convention country, a certificate issued by the Governor or by or under the authority of the government of any Liability Convention country other than the Virgin Islands.

(4) Any certificate required by this section to be in force in respect of a ship shall be carried in the ship and shall, on demand, be produced by the master to any customs officer or officer of the Governor and, if the ship is registered in the Virgin Islands, to any proper officer.

(5) If a ship enters or leaves, or attempts to enter or leave, a port or arrives at or leaves, or attempts to arrive at or leave, a terminal in contravention of subsection (2) above, the master or owner shall be liable on conviction on indictment to a fine, or on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding \$75,000.

(6) If a ship fails to carry, or the master of a ship fails to produce, a certificate as required by subsection (4) above, the master shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding \$50,000.

(7) If a ship attempts to leave a port in the Virgin Islands in contravention of this section the ship may be detained.

(8) In this section, “proper officer” in relation to a port in a country or territory outside the Virgin Islands means any officer exercising in that port functions similar to those of the Registrar of Shipping.

Issue certificate by Governor.

164.—(1) Subject to subsection (2) below, if the Governor is satisfied, on the application for such a certificate as is mentioned in section 163 in respect of a ship registered in the Virgin Islands or in any country which is not a Liability Convention country, that there will be in force in respect of the ship, throughout the period for which the certificate is to be issued, a contract of insurance or other security satisfying the requirements of Article VII of the Liability Convention, the Governor shall issue such a certificate to the owner.

(2) If the Governor is of opinion that there is a doubt whether the person providing the insurance or other security will be able to meet his obligations thereunder, or whether the insurance or other

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security will cover the owner's liability under section 153 in all circumstances, he may refuse the certificate.

(3) The Governor may make regulations providing for the cancellation and delivery up of a certificate under this section in such circumstances as may be prescribed by the regulations.

(4) If a person required by regulations under subsection (3) above to deliver up a certificate fails to do so he shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding \$20,000.

(5) The Governor shall send a copy of any certificate issued by him under this section in respect of a ship registered in the Virgin Islands to the Registrar of Shipping and the Registrar shall make the copy available for public inspection.

Rights of third parties against insurers.

165.—(1) Where it is alleged that the owner of a ship has incurred a liability under section 153 as a result of any discharge or escape of oil occurring, or as a result of any relevant threat of contamination arising, while there was in force a contract of insurance or other security to which such a certificate as is mentioned in section 163 related, proceedings to enforce a claim in respect of the liability may be brought against the person who provided the insurance or other security (in the following provisions of this section referred to as “the owner”).

(2) In any proceedings brought against the insurer by virtue of this section it shall be a defence (in addition to any defence affecting the owner's liability), to prove that the discharge or escape, or (as the case may be) the threat of contamination, was due to the wilful misconduct of the owner himself.

(3) The insurer may limit his liability in respect of claims made against him by virtue of this section in like manner and to the same extent as the owner may limit his liability but the insurer may do so whether or not the discharge or escape, or (as the case may be) the threat of contamination, resulted from anything done or omitted to be done by the owner as mentioned in section 157(3).

(4) Where the owner and the insurer each apply to the court for the limitation of his liability any sum paid into court in pursuance of either application shall be treated as paid also in pursuance of the other.

Supplementary

Jurisdiction of Virgin Islands courts and registration of foreign judgments.

166.—(1) Paragraph (d) of section 1(1) of the Administration of Justice Act 1956 as applied in the Virgin Islands by the Admiralty Jurisdiction (Virgin Islands) Order in Council 1961⁽⁶⁾ shall be construed as extending to any claim in respect of a liability incurred under this Chapter.

(2) Where –

- (a) any oil is discharged or escapes from a ship but does not result in any damage caused by contamination in the territory of the Virgin Islands and no measures are reasonably taken to prevent or minimise such damage in that territory, or
- (b) any relevant threat of contamination arises but no measures are reasonably taken to prevent or minimise such damage in the territory of the Virgin Islands,

no court in the Virgin Islands shall entertain any action (whether in rem or in personam) to enforce a claim arising from any relevant damage or cost –

- (i) against the owner of the ship, or

⁽⁶⁾ S.I. 1961/2033 amended by S.I. 1965/130: By virtue of section 17(2)(b) of the Interpretation Act 1978 (1978 c. 30). S.I. 1961/2033 has effect as if made under section 150(2) and (3) of the Supreme Court Act 1981 (1981 c. 54).

(ii) against any person to whom section 156(1) (ii) applies, unless any such damage or cost resulted from anything done or omitted to be done as mentioned in that provision.

(3) In subsection (2) above, “relevant damage or cost” means –

(a) in relation to any such discharge or escape as is mentioned in paragraph (a) of that subsection, any damage caused in the territory of another Liability Convention country by contamination resulting from the discharge or escape, or any cost incurred in taking measures to prevent or minimise such damage in the territory of another Liability Convention country;

(b) in relation to any such threat of contamination as is mentioned in paragraph (b) of that subsection, any cost incurred in taking measures to prevent or minimise such damage in the territory of another Liability Convention country; or

(c) any damage caused by any measures taken as mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b) above.

(4) The Foreign Judgments (Reciprocal Enforcement) Ordinance 1964 (7) shall apply, whether or not it would so apply apart from this section, to any judgment given by a court in a Liability Convention country to enforce a claim in respect of a liability incurred under any provision corresponding to section 153; and in its application to such a judgment that Ordinance shall have effect with the omission of subsections (2) and (3) of section 6.

Government ships.

167.—(1) Nothing in the preceding provisions of this Chapter applies in relation to any warship or any ship for the time being used by the government of any State for other than commercial purposes.

(2) In relation to a ship owned by a State and for the time being used for commercial purposes it shall be a sufficient compliance with section 163(2) if there is in force a certificate issued by the government of that State and showing that the ship is owned by that State and that any liability for pollution damage as defined in Article I of the Liability Convention will be met up to the limit prescribed by Article V of the Convention.

(3) Every Liability Convention State shall, for the purposes of any proceedings brought in a court in the Virgin Islands to enforce a claim in respect of a liability incurred under section 153, be deemed to have submitted to the jurisdiction of that court, and accordingly rules of court may provide for the manner in which such proceedings are to be commenced and carried on; but nothing in this subsection shall authorise the issue of execution against the property of any State.

Limitation of liability under section 154.

168. For the purposes of section 17 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1979 as extended to the Virgin Islands any liability incurred under section 154 shall be deemed to be a liability to damages in respect of such damage to property as is mentioned in paragraph 1(a) of Article 2 of the Convention Limitation of Liability for Maritime Claims 1976.

Saving for recourse actions.

169. Nothing in this Chapter shall prejudice any claim, or the enforcement of any claim, a person incurring any liability under this Chapter may have against another person in respect of that liability.

Intepretation.

170.—(1) In this Chapter –

“the court” means the High Court of the Virgin Islands;

(7) Laws of the Virgin Islands, Revised Ed. 1991. Cap 27

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“damage” includes loss;

“dollars” means United States dollars;

“oil” means persistent hydrocarbon mineral oil;

“owner” means the person or persons registered as the owner of the ship or, in the absence of registration, the person or person owning the ship, except that, in relation to a ship owned by a State which is operated by a person registered as the ship’s operator, it means the person registered as its operator;

“relevant threat of contamination” shall be construed in accordance with section 153(2) or 154(2); and

“ship” (subject to section 154(5)) means any sea-going vessel or seaborne craft of any type whatsoever.

(2) In relation to any damage or cost resulting from the discharge or escape of any oil from a ship or from a relevant threat of contamination, references in this Chapter to the owner of the ship are references to the owner at the time of the occurrence or first of the occurrences resulting in the discharge or escape or (as the case may be) in the threat of contamination.

(3) . . .

(4) References in this Chapter to the territory of any country include the territorial sea of that country and –

(a) in the case of the Virgin Islands, any area within the fisheries zone established by the Proclamation dated 9th March 1977 establishing a Fisheries Zone contiguous to the Territorial Sea of the Virgin Islands (8); and

(b) in the case of any other Liability Convention country, the exclusive economic zone of that country established in accordance with international law, or, if such a zone has not been established, such area adjacent to the territorial sea of that country and extending not more than 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of that sea is measured as may have been determined by that State in question in accordance with international law.

171. —

CHAPTER IV

INTERNATIONAL OIL POLLUTION COMPENSATION FUND

Preliminary

Meaning of the “Liability Convention”, “the Fund Convention” and related expressions.

172.—(1) In this Chapter –

(a) “the Liability convention” has the same meaning as in Chapter III of this Part;

(b) “the Fund Convention” means the International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage 1992;

(c) “the fund” means the International Fund established by the Fund Convention; and

(d) “Fund Convention country” means a country in respect of which the Fund Convention is in force, and includes the United Kingdom and any relevant British possession to which the Fund Convention has been extended.

(8) [S.R. & O No. 4 of 1977.](#)

(2) If Her Majesty by Order in Council declares that any State specified in the Order is a party to the Fund Convention in respect of any country so specified, the Order shall, while in force, be conclusive evidence that that State is a party to that Convention in respect of that country.

Contributions to Fund

Contributions by importers of oil and others.

173.—(1) Contributions shall be payable to the Fund in respect of oil carried by sea to ports or terminal installations in the Virgin Islands otherwise than on a voyage only within waters landward of the baselines for measuring the breadth of the territorial sea of the Virgin Islands.

(2) Subsection (1) above applies whether or not the oil is being imported, and applies even if contributions are payable in respect of carriage of the same oil on a previous voyage.

(3) Contributions shall also be payable to the Fund in respect of oil when first received in any installation in the Virgin Islands after having been carried by sea and discharged in a port or terminal installation in a country which is not a Fund Convention country.

(4) The person liable to pay contributions is –

- (a) in the case of oil which is being imported into the Virgin Islands, the importer, and
- (b) otherwise, the person by whom the oil is received.

(5) A person shall not be liable to make contributions in respect of oil imported or received by him in any year if the oil so imported or received in the year does not exceed 150,000 tonnes.

(6) For the purpose of subsection (5) above –

- (a) all the members of a group of companies shall be treated as a single person, and
- (b) any two or more companies which have been amalgamated into a single company shall be treated as the same person as that single company.

(7) The contributions payable by a person for any year shall –

- (a) be of such amount as may be determined by the Director of the Fund under Article 12 of the Fund Convention and notified to that person by the Fund;
- (b) be payable in such instalments, becoming due at such times, as may be so notified to him; and if any amount due from him remains unpaid after the date on which it became due, it shall from then on bear interest, at a rate determined from time to time by the Assembly of the Fund, until it is paid.

(8) The Governor may by regulations impose on persons who are or may be likely to pay contributions under this section obligations to give security for payment to the Governor, or the Fund.

(9) Regulations under subsection (8) above –

- (a) may contain such supplemental or incidental provisions as appear to the Governor expedient,
- (b) may impose penalties for contravention for the regulations punishable on summary conviction by a fine not exceeding \$20,000 or such lower limit as may be specified in the regulations.

(10) In this section and in section 174, unless the context otherwise requires –

“company” means a body incorporated under the law of the Virgin Islands, or of any other country;

“group” in relation to companies, means a holding company and any subsidiary or commonly controlled entity, subject, in the case of a company incorporated outside the Virgin Islands, to any necessary modifications of those definitions;

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“importer” means the person by whom or on whose behalf the oil in question is entered for customs or excise purposes on importation, and “import” shall be construed accordingly;

“oil” means crude oil and fuel oil, and

- (a) “crude oil” means any liquid hydrocarbon mixture occurring naturally in the earth whether or not treated to render it suitable for transportation, and includes –
 - (i) crude oil from which distillate fractions have been removed, and
 - (ii) crude oil to which distillate fractions have been added,
- (b) “fuel oil” means heavy distillates or residues from crude oil or blends of such materials intended for use as a fuel for the production of heat or power of a quality equivalent to the “American Society for Testing and Materials' Specification for Number Four Fuel Oil (Designation D396-69)”, or heavier,

“terminal installation” means any site for the storage of oil in bulk which is capable of receiving oil from waterborne transportation, including any facility situated offshore and linked to any such site.

Power to obtain information.

174.—(1) For the purpose of transmitting to the Fund the names and addresses of the persons who under section 173 are liable to make contributions to the Fund for any year, and the quantity of oil in respect of which they are so liable, the Governor may by notice require any person engaged in producing, treating, distributing or transporting oil to furnish such information as may be specified in the notice.

(2) A notice under this section may require a company to give such information as may be required to ascertain whether its liability is affected by section 173(6).

(3) A notice under this section may specify the way in which, and the time within which, it is to be complied with.

(4) In proceedings by the Fund against any person to recover any amount due under section 173, particulars contained in any list transmitted by the Governor to the Fund shall, so far as those particulars are based on information obtained under this section, be admissible as evidence of the facts stated in the list; and so far as particulars which are so admissible are based on information given by the person against whom the proceedings are brought, those particulars shall be presumed to be accurate until the contrary is proved.

(5) If a person discloses any information which has been furnished to or obtained by him under this section, or in connection with the execution of this section, then, unless the disclosure is made –

- (a) with the consent of the person from whom the information was obtained, or
- (b) in connection with the execution of this section, or
- (c) for the purposes of any legal proceedings arising out of this section or of any report of such proceedings,

he shall be liable on summary conviction to a Fine not exceeding \$20,000.

(6) A person who –

- (a) refuses or wilfully neglects to comply with a notice under this section, or
- (b) in furnishing any information in compliance with a notice under this section makes any statement which he knows to be false in a material particular, or recklessly makes any statement which is false in a material particular,

shall be liable –

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- (i) on summary conviction, to a Fine not exceeding \$25,000 in the case of an offence under paragraph (a) above and not exceeding \$20,000 in the case of an offence under paragraph (b) above, and
- (ii) on conviction on indictment, to a Fine, or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve months, or both.

Compensation for persons suffering pollution damage

Liability of the Fund.

175.—(1) The Fund shall be liable for pollution damage in the territory of the Virgin Islands if the person suffering the damage has been unable to obtain full compensation under section 153—

- (a) because the discharge or escape, or the relevant threat of contamination, by reason of which the damage was caused –
 - (i) resulted from an exceptional, inevitable and irresistible phenomenon, or
 - (ii) was due wholly to anything done or omitted to be done by another person (not being a servant or agent of the owner) with intent to do damage, or
 - (iii) was due wholly to the negligence or wrongful act of a government or other authority in exercising its function of maintaining lights or other navigational aids for the maintenance of which it was responsible,(and because liability is accordingly wholly displaced by section 155), or
- (b) because the owner or guarantor liable for the damage cannot meet his obligations in full, or
- (c) because the damage exceeds the liability under section 153 as limited by section 157.

(2) Subsection (1) above shall apply with the substitution for the words “Virgin Islands” of the words “a Fund Convention country” where the incident has caused pollution damage in the territory of the Virgin Islands and of another Fund Convention country, and proceedings under the Liability Convention for compensation for the pollution damage have been brought in a country which is not a Fund Convention country or in the Virgin Islands.

(3) Where the incident has caused pollution damage in the territory of the Virgin Islands and of another country in respect of which the Liability Convention is in force, references in this section to the provisions of Chapter III of this part shall include references to the corresponding provisions of the law of any country giving effect to the Liability Convention.

(4)

(5) For the purposes of this section an owner or guarantor is to be treated as incapable of meeting his obligations if the obligations have not been met after all reasonable steps to pursue the legal remedies available have been taken.

(6) Expenses reasonably incurred, and sacrifices reasonably made, by the owner voluntarily to prevent or minimise pollution damage shall be treated as pollution damage for the purpose of this section, and accordingly he shall be in the same position with respect to claims against the Fund under this section as if he had a claim in respect of liability under section 153.

(7) The Fund shall incur no obligation under this section if –

- (a) it proves that the pollution damage –
 - (i) resulted from an act of war, hostilities, civil war or insurrection, or
 - (ii) was caused by oil which has escaped or been discharged from a warship or other ship owned or operated by a State and used, at the time of the occurrence, only on Government non-commercial service, or

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- (b) the claimant cannot prove that the damage resulted from an occurrence involving a ship identified by him, or involving two or more ships one of which is identified by him.
- (8) If the Fund proves that the pollution damage resulted wholly or partly –
 - (a) from anything done or omitted to be done with intent to cause damage by the person who suffered the damage, or
 - (b) from the negligence of that person,the Fund may (subject to subsection (10) below) be exonerated wholly or partly from its obligations to pay compensation to that person,
- (9) Where the liability under section 153 in respect of the pollution damage is limited to any extent by subsection (8) of that section, the Fund shall (subject to subsection (10) below) be exonerated to the same extent.
- (10) Subsections (8) and (9) above shall not apply where the pollution damage consists of the costs of preventive measures or any damage caused by such measures.

Limitation of Fund's liability under section 175.

176.—(1) The Fund's liability under section 175 shall be subject to the limits imposed by paragraphs 4 and 5 of Article 4 of the Fund Convention (which impose an overall limit on the liabilities of the Fund and the text of which is set out in Part I of Schedule 5), and in those provisions references to the Liability Convention are references to the Liability Convention within the meaning of this Chapter.

(2) A Certificate given by the Director of the Fund stating that subparagraph (c) of paragraph 4 of Article 4 of the Fund Convention is applicable to any claim under section 175 shall be conclusive evidence for the purpose of this Chapter that it is so applicable.

(3) For the purpose of giving effect to paragraphs 4 and 5 of Article 4 of the Fund Convention a court giving judgment against the Fund in proceedings under section 175 shall notify the Fund, and –

- (a) no steps shall be taken to enforce the judgment unless and until the court gives leave to enforce it,
- (b) that leave shall not be given unless and until the Fund notifies the court either that the amount of the claim is not to be reduced under those paragraphs, or that it is to be reduced to a specified amount, and
- (c) in the latter case the judgment shall be enforceable only for the reduced amount.

(4) Any steps taken to obtain payment of an amount or a reduced amount in pursuance of such a judgment as is mentioned in subsection (3) above shall be steps to obtain payment in dollars; and –

- (a) for the purpose of converting such an amount from special drawing rights into dollars one special drawing right shall be treated as equal to such a sum in dollars as the International Monetary Fund have Fixed as being the equivalent of one special drawing right for –
 - (i) the relevant day, namely the day on which the Assembly of the Fund decide the date for the First payment of compensation in respect of the incident, or
 - (ii) if no sum has been so Fixed for the relevant day, the last day before that day for which a sum has been so Fixed; and
- (b) a certificate given by or on behalf of the Ministry of Finance stating –
 - (i) that a particular sum in dollars has been so Fixed for the relevant day, or
 - (ii) that no sum has been so Fixed for the relevant day, and that a particular sum in dollars has been so Fixed for a day which is the last day for which a sum has been so Fixed before the relevant day,

Shall be conclusive evidence of those matters for the purpose of this Chapter.

(5) The Secretary of State may by order make such amendments of this section and Part I of Schedule 5 as appear to him to be appropriate for the purpose of giving effect to the entry into force of any amendment of the provisions set out in that Schedule.

(6) Any document purporting to be such a certificate as is mentioned in subsection (2) or (4) (b) above shall, in any legal proceedings, be received in evidence and, unless the contrary is proved, be deemed to be such a certificate.

Supplemental

Jurisdiction and effect of judgments.

177.—(1) Paragraph (d) of Section 1(1) to the Administration of Justice Act 1956 as applied in the Virgin Islands by the Admiralty Jurisdiction (Virgin Islands) Order 1961⁽⁹⁾ shall be construed as extending to any claim in respect of a liability falling on the Fund under this Chapter.

(2) Where in accordance with rules of court made for the purpose of this subsection the Fund has been given notice of proceedings brought against an owner or guarantor in respect of liability under section 153, any judgment given in the proceedings shall, after it has become final and enforceable, become binding upon the Fund in the sense that the facts and evidence in the judgment may not be disputed by the Fund even if the Fund has not intervened in the proceedings.

(3) Where a person incurs a liability under the law of a Fund Convention country corresponding to Chapter III of this Part for damage which is partly in the territory of the Virgin Islands, subsection (2) above shall, for the purpose of proceedings under this Chapter, apply with any necessary modifications to a judgment in proceedings under that law of the said country.

(4) Subject to subsection (5) below, the Foreign Judgments (Reciprocal Enforcement) Ordinance 1964 shall apply, whether or not it would so apply apart from this subsection, to any judgment given by a court in a Fund Convention country to enforce a claim in respect of liability incurred under any provision corresponding to section 175; and in its application to such a judgment the said Ordinance shall have effect with the omission of subsections (2) and (3) of section 6.

(5) No steps shall be taken to enforce such a judgment unless and until the court in which it is registered under the 1964 Ordinance gives leave to enforce it; and –

- (a) that leave shall not be given unless and until the Fund notifies the court either that the amount of the claim is not to be reduced under paragraph 4 of Article 4 of the Fund Convention (as set out in Part I of Schedule 5) or that it is to be reduced to a specified amount; and
- (b) in the latter case, the judgment shall be enforceable only for the reduced amount.

Extinguishments of claims.

178.—(1) No action to enforce a claim against the Fund under this Chapter shall be entertained by a court in the Virgin Islands unless –

- (a) the action is commenced, or
- (b) a third party notice of action to enforce a claim against the owner or his guarantor in respect of the same damage is given to the Fund,

not later than three years after the claim against the Fund arose. In this subsection “third party notice” means a notice of the kind described in section 177(2) and (3).

(9) S.I. 1961/2033 amended by S.I. 1965/130: By virtue of section 17(2)(b) of the Interpretation Act 1978 (1978 c. 30). S.I. 1961/2033 has effect as if made under section 150(2) and (3) of the Supreme Court Act 1981 (1981 c. 54).

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(2) No action to enforce a claim against the Fund under this Chapter shall be entertained by a court in the Virgin Islands unless the action is commenced not later than six years after the occurrence, or First of the occurrences, resulting in the discharge or escape or (as the case may be) in the relevant threat of contamination, by reason of which the claim against the Fund arose.

Subrogation.

179.—(1) In respect of any sum paid by the Fund as compensation for pollution damage the Fund shall acquire by subrogation any rights in respect of the damage which the recipient has (or but for the payment would have) against any other person.

(2) In respect of any sum paid by a public authority in the Virgin Islands as compensation for pollution damage, that authority shall acquire by subrogation any rights which the recipient has against the Fund under this Chapter.

Supplementary provisions as to proceedings involving the Fund.

180.—(1) Any proceedings by or against the Fund may either be instituted by or against the Fund in its own name or be instituted by or against the Director of the Fund as the Fund's representative.

(2) Evidence of any instrument issued by any organ of the Fund or of any document in the custody of the Fund, or any entry in or extract from such a document, may be given in any legal proceedings by production of a copy certified as a true copy by an official of the Fund; and any document purporting to be such a copy shall, in any such proceedings, be received in evidence without proof of the official position or handwriting of the person signing the certificate.

Interpretation.

181.—(1) In this Chapter, unless the context otherwise requires –

“damage” includes loss;

“discharge or escape”, in relation to pollution damage, means the discharge or escape of oil from the ship;

“dollars” means United States dollars;

“guarantor” means any person providing insurance or other financial security to cover the owner's liability of the kind described in section 163;

“incident” means any occurrence, or series of occurrences having the same origin, resulting in a discharge or escape of oil from a ship or in a relevant threat of contaminations;

“oil” except in section 173 and 174, means persistent hydrocarbon mineral oil;

“owner” means the person or persons registered as the owner of the ship or, in the absence of registration, the person or persons owning the ship, except that, in relation to a ship owned by a State which is operated by a person registered as the ship's operator, it means the person registered as its operator;

“pollution damage” means –

- (a) damage caused outside a ship by contamination resulting from a discharge or escape of oil from the ship,
- (b) the cost of preventive measures, and
- (c) further damage caused by preventive measures, but does not include any damage attributable to any impairment of the environment except to the extent that any such damage consists of –
 - (i) any loss of profits, or

- (ii) the cost of any reasonable measures of reinstatement actually taken or to be taken; “preventive measures” means any reasonable measures taken by any person to prevent or minimise pollution damage, being measures taken —
 - (a) after an incident has occurred, or
 - (b) in the case of an incident consisting of a series of occurrences, after the First of those occurrences;“relevant threat of contamination” means a grave and imminent threat of damage being caused outside a ship by contamination resulting from a discharge or escape of oil from the ship; and “ship” means any ship (within the meaning of Chapter III of this Part) to which section 153 applies.
- (2) For the purposes of this Chapter –
- (a) references to a discharge or escape of oil from a ship are references to such a discharge or escape wherever it may occur, and whether it is of oil carried in a cargo tank or of oil carried in a bunker fuel tank; and
 - (b) where more than one discharge or escape results from the same occurrence or from a series of occurrences having the same origin, they shall be treated as one.
- (3) References in this Chapter to the territory of any country shall be construed in accordance with section 170(4) reading the reference to a Liability Convention country as a reference to a Fund Convention country.

SCHEDULE 5

Section 176.

OVERALL LIMIT ON LIABILITY OF FUND

PART 1

PERMANENT PROVISION

ARTICLE 4 — PARAGRAPHS 4 AND 5

- (a) (a) Except as otherwise provided in sub-paragraphs (b) and
- (c) of this paragraph, the aggregate amount of compensation payable by the Fund under this Article shall in respect of any one incident be limited, so that the total sum of that amount and the amount of compensation actually paid under the Liability Convention for pollution damage within the scope of application of this Convention as defined in Article 3 shall not exceed 135 million units of account.
- (b) Except as otherwise provided in sub-paragraph (c), the aggregate amount of compensation payable by the Fund under this Article for pollution damage resulting from a natural phenomenon of an exceptional, inevitable and irresistible character shall not exceed 135 million units of account.
- (c) The maximum amount of compensation referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) shall be 200 million units of account with respect to any incident occurring during any period when there are three Parties to this Convention in respect of which the combined relevant quantity of contributing oil received by persons in the territories of such Parties, during the preceding calendar year, equalled or exceeded 600 million tons.

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- (d) Interest accrued on a fund constituted in accordance with Article V, paragraph 3, of the Liability Convention, if any, shall not be taken into account for the computation of the maximum compensation payable by the Fund under this Article.
 - (e) The amounts mentioned in this Article shall be converted into national currency on the basis of the value of that currency by reference to the Special Drawing Right on the date of the decision of the Assembly of the Fund as to the First date of payment of compensation.
5. Where the amount of established claims against the Fund exceeds the aggregate amount of compensation payable under paragraph 4, the amount available shall be distributed in such a manner that the proportion between any established claim and the amount of compensation actually recovered by the claimant under this Convention shall be the same for all claimants.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

The International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage 1969 (CLC), which was implemented in the Virgin Islands by Schedule 1 to the Merchant Shipping (Oil Pollution) (Virgin Islands) Order 1975, provides uniform rules and procedures for determining questions of liability and for awarding compensation when damage is caused by pollution resulting from the escape or discharge of oil from ships. The International Convention on the establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage 1971 (the Fund Convention), which was implemented in the Islands by Schedule 2 to the 1975 Order, set up an international fund to provide a supplementary system for compensation and indemnification for such damage. The 1992 Protocol to the CLC, and the 1992 Protocol to the Fund Convention respectively create a new 1992 Civil Liability Convention and a 1992 Fund Convention which together provide for higher levels of compensation and more extensive liability. The 1992 Conventions are given effect in the United Kingdom by Part VI, Chapters III and IV of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995. This Order extends those provisions of the 1995 Act to the Virgin Islands, with the necessary exceptions, adaptations and modifications.