

Information on ballast water operations in the Ports of Bremen

Extract of the Bremen Port Regulations:

„§ 28b

Discharge of ballast water and sediments

- (1) Ballast water may be discharged into the port waters only under following condition:
1. the ballast water had been exchanged at sea according to standard D-1 as required by regulation B-4 of the Ballast Water Convention, or
 2. the ballast water had been treated in an approved and duly operative treatment facility according to standard D-2; when this facility uses active substances, the facility requires approval by the International Maritime Organization according to standard D-3 of the Ballast Water Convention.
- (2) It is prohibited to discharge sediments generated by the cleaning of ballast tanks into the water of the port. Sediments from ballast tanks shall be disposed of to a port reception facility under observation of the applicable waste regulations.”

According to regulation B-4 of the Convention ballast water may be exchanged only in sea areas where the distance from the nearest land is at least 50 nm and where the depth of water is at least 200 m. Where these minimum requirements do not exist, port states may identify other sea areas in agreement with neighbouring states. For the North Sea, an exchange area has been communicated by IMO Circular BWM.2/Circ.56. Thus, the exchange of ballast water is permitted within the blue coloured areas as shown in the enclosed map, within the red coloured areas it is prohibited.

However, regulation B-4 regulates as well, that a ship is not obliged to deviate from the intended route or to reduce speed in order to comply with the exchange requirements. The majority of traffic in the North Sea runs through red coloured areas or crosses blue areas only during a short period of the voyage. Therefore, it is assumed that the requirement to exchange the ballast water is waived by mentioned regulation, whenever the ballast water was taken on board in ports located in the North Sea or in the Baltic Sea.

Notwithstanding the above, ballast water taken on board in ports outside the North Sea or Baltic Sea shall not be discharged into the port waters. There is no possibility to discharge ballast water to a port reception facility, discharge is only possible in authorized exchange areas at sea. Any violation against this provision will be prosecuted as administrative offence.

Enclosure:

Ballast water exchange areas in the North Sea

Blue Colour: exchange permitted

Red colour: exchange prohibited

