1.1 General

This plan is written in accordance with the requirements of regulation B-1 of the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004 (the convention) and the IMO 'Guidelines for Ballast Water Exchange (G6)' resolution MEPC.124(53) and 'Guidelines for Ballast Water Management and Development of Ballast Water Management Plan' resolution MEPC 127(53).

The purpose of the Manual is to meet the requirements for the control and management of ship's ballast water and sediments in accordance with the Guidelines for Ballast Water Management and the Development of Ballast Water Management Plans resolution MEPC 127(53) (The Guidelines). It provides standard operational guidance for the planning and management of ships' ballast water and sediments and describes safe procedures to be followed.

1.2 Objective

The objective of this Plan is to provide safe and effective procedure to ballast water management onboard. To assist the ship Master and officers in minimizing the risk of introducing harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens from ships' ballast water and associated sediments, while maintaining ship safety.

To assist the Master and Officers onboard the ship in complying International and/or local regulations, about proper uptake of ballast water, exchanging ballast at sea and discharging of ballast water in port, either to reception facility or to over-board discharge.

1.3 Scope

This Ballast Water Management Plan applies to this specified vessel only.

1.4 Purpose

Ballast water is essential to control trim, list, draught, stability, or stresses of the ship. However, ballast water may contain aquatic organisms or pathogens, which, if introduced into the sea including estuaries, or into fresh water-courses, may create hazards to the environment, human health, property or resources, impair biological diversity or interfere with other legitimate uses of such areas.

Studies carried out in several countries have shown that many species of bacteria, plants and animals can survive in a viable form in the ballast water and sediment carried in ships, even after journeys of several weeks duration. Subsequent discharge of ballast water or sediment into the waters of port states may result in the establishment of colonies of harmful species and pathogens which can seriously upset the existing ecological balance. Although other methods have been identified by which organisms are transferred between geographically separated sea areas, ballast water discharge from ships appears to have been prominent among those identified.

The potential for ballast water discharge to cause harm has been recognised not only by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), but also by the World Health Organization, which is concerned about the role of ballast water as a medium for the spreading of epidemic disease bacteria.

The selected methods of ballast water management take into account the need to ensure that Ballast Water Management practices used to comply with this Convention do not cause greater harm than they prevent to the environment, human health, property or resources of any States and the safety of the ship.

It is estimated that at least 7,000 different species are being carried in ships' ballast tanks around the world. Studies carried out in several countries indicated that many species of bacteria, plants, and animals can survive in a viable form in the ballast water and sediment carried in ships, even after journeys of several months' duration.

Subsequent discharge of ballast water or sediment into the waters of port States may result in the establishment of harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens which may pose threats to indigenous human, animal and plant life, and the marine environment. When all factors are favourable, an introduced species by survive to establish a reproductive population in the host environment, it may even become invasive, out-competing native species and multiplying into pest proportions. Although other media have been identified as being responsible for transferring organisms between geographically separated water bodies, ballast water discharge from ships appears to have been among the most prominent.

As a result IMO has developed guidelines for the development and implementation of a Ballast Water Management on board ships aiming to assist Governments, appropriate authorities, ships masters, operators, owners and port authorities, as well as other interested parties, in preventing, minimising and ultimately eliminating the risk of introducing harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens from ships' ballast water and associated sediments while protecting ships' safety.

Good record keeping is critical to the success of a sound ballast water management program.

The appointed ballast water management officer is responsible for ensuring the maintenance of appropriate records and that ballast water management and/or treatment procedures are followed and recorded.

The function of the Ballast Water Management Plan is to assist in complying with IMO guidelines and quarantine measures intended to minimise the risk of transplanting harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens from ships' ballast water and associated sediments, while maintaining ship safety.

As part of this function the plan provides information to port state control and other authorised officers about a ship's ballast handling system, sampling points and ballast water management system.

The plan should not be used or regarded as a guide to ballasting.

1.5 Responsibility

It is the owners/operators or master's responsibility to regularly review the plan and ensure that the information contained therein is accurate and updated.

1.6 Revision

This Manual has been examined by vessel Class Society and no alteration or revision shall be made to any part of it without the prior approval of the Class.

This plan may be inspected on request by an authorised authority.

Changes to non-mandatory information in Appendices will not be required to be approved.

1.7 Exemption

Any exemption granted to vessel and what actions have been taken with regards to the vessel's ballast water must be recorded into the Ballast Water Reporting Book.